

THE INDYPENDENT

AIDS PROJECT CREATES HOPE IN SOUTH AFRICA

BY HEATHER HADDON

In January, 25 South Africans shed their shoes, and their reservations, before entering an anonymous Cape Town conference room. They came from every walk of life — gay and straight, teenage and adult, black and white — to share their life stories with strangers. But despite demographic differences, all spoke of poverty, discrimination and death: an ex-inmate now ill, orphans trying to care for their siblings; one woman gang raped at 15.

With tears and emotions flowing, one matron stood. "Oh lord I need your help one more time," she sang, her strong arms rose over the turban gracing her head. "Please God we need your help." Others joined in cathartic song.

Gatherings such as this — which was described by Living Together Project founder Betsy Pendry in a recent interview — have taken place now for six months, during which time unabashed honesty has helped transform a sterile space into what came to be called the "living room."

While seemingly a born-again revival, the two-year-old Living Together Project has helped tap the power of community, not religion, to shatter the silence surrounding AIDS. Pendry's philosophy is simple — either encourage discussion, performance and arts that address the disease, or the epidemic will just continue to feed off society-wide silence.

"We all live with HIV. Some have the virus, but all of us are affected by the social virus," Pendry, who left AIDS work in New York City in 1997, told the *Indy*dependent. "People have been working to stop AIDS for 20 years, but we haven't tackled the issue of stigma. That's not something that can be legislated."

Cheaper drugs and fairer legislation alone cannot turn the tide of AIDS, a global plague that threatens the very fabric of struggling communities and countries. In the disease's 21st year, growing apathy and lingering taboo are among the largest barriers to ending the epidemic.

Picking up the torch lit by early AIDS activists, growing numbers of campaigners in South Africa and elsewhere are refusing to stay silent. And in the process, the global south is proving that this plight will continue to kill until it is everyone's problem.

CONTINUED ON P. 15



**COMMUNITY
GARDENS**
BACKROOM DEALS VS.
NEIGHBORHOOD GREEN
SPACE

Page 4

BATTLING BACK



FRED ASKEW

INSPIRING VICTORIES LIFT SPIRITS IN TROUBLED TIMES

The last 20 months have been bleak ones for the global justice movement. America nears its 600th day under the reign of George Bush II, the unelected son of a former president who seized power in December 2000 through voter fraud, racist intimidation, and Supreme Court fiat. And on Sept. 11, as hundreds of thousands of global justice activists prepared to take to the streets of Washington, D.C., to protest the neoliberal policies of the IMF and World Bank, terrorist attacks on New York City and the Pentagon stunned even the most dedicated anti-corporate globalization activists and ignited worldwide waves of shock, fear and grief. In a matter of minutes, the fragile paradigm of resistance that had emerged two years earlier in Seattle seemed shattered forever.

But as a dark blanket of endless war, terror and surveillance settles over the globe, resistance continues, deep within the cracks and fissures of Empire. This month we, the collective that produces the *Indy*dependent, take a look at the people and groups that are battling back against systems of injustice and oppression, struggles that seem to have only grown more important since last September. Some of the battles are large, like recent massive popular uprisings in Paraguay (p. 13); some are smaller but perhaps more immediate to people's everyday lives, like the localized struggles over the U.S. public education system (p. 8); and some, as chronicled in the story of the East Timor Action Network (p. 13), can shake the underpinnings of the global order.

**SPECIAL SECTION
pages 6 - 13**

Beyond focusing on individual battles and victories, we also take a longer view and examine groups that seek to change the very foundations of capitalist society. The decade-long struggle over the Pacifica Radio network (p. 9) was about more than just the fate of five radio stations; for many it was about building an alternative system of media that stood outside the iron cage of corporate control. In the economic realm, upstate communities like Ithaca and Oneonta promote local currencies and attempt to forge a new and more equitable local economic infrastructure (p. 11).

Of course, perspective here is key. It would be foolish, for example, to make the claim that an inspiring but short-term victory by the Prison Moratorium Project (p. 7) can really correct the deep-seated defects in the U.S. criminal justice system. Our regular selection of local, national and international coverage reminds us, should we need a reminder, that global developments tend to be far more depressing than exhilarating.

In the end, global justice activist Starhawk writes (p. 6) that "trying to counter the system may seem an overwhelming and hopeless task." But she then goes on to say that "a strategy for global justice involves ... telling the truth about the system, showing how it affects people on an everyday basis, pointing out clearly where it doesn't work. Ultimately, our goal is to undermine the legitimacy of the system and erode the tacit consent that supports it."

Stay tuned. The struggle continues.

HOMEMADE \$\$
ITHACA CURRENCY
SPREADS COMMON
CENTS IN NY TOWN

Page 11

VENEZUELA
PRESSURE MOUNTS ON
HUGO CHAVEZ FROM ALL
DIRECTIONS

Page 16



new york city independent media center

Email :
imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org

Phone:
212.684.8112

Web:
NYC: www.nyc.indymedia.org
GLOBAL: www.indymedia.org

Office and Mail:
NYC Independent Media Center
34 E. 29th St. 2nd Floor
NY, NY 10016

What is the IMC?

With autonomous chapters in 100 cities throughout the world, the two-year-old Independent Media Center has become an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC's mission is to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to illuminate and analyze issues impacting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate.

Unlike corporate media, we espouse open dialogue, and the importance of placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, and away from the drive of profit.

The *Indy* is funded by benefits, subscriptions and contributions. All reporting is done by NYC IMC volunteers unless otherwise noted.

What can I do to get involved?
The IMC has an open door. You can write for the *Indy*, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos, or just help us run the office. As an organization relying entirely on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

PRODUCTION:
Chris Anderson, Silvia Arana, Ana Basujno, Mike Burke, Ellen Davidson, Lourdes Delgado, Miguel Erb, Simon Finger, Chris Fleisher, A.K. Gupta, Heather Haddon, Jen Neumann, Donald Paneth, Mark Pickens, Emily Reinhardt, Armand Samos, Jessica Stein, Jeanne Strole, John Tarleton, Anne Venesky, Gabriel Woodhouse

FROM THE NEWSWIRE
Here's a sampling of recent posts and comments to the NYC and global newswires. Each Independent Media Center website features open publishing software that allows readers to post articles, stories, photographs, audio clips and video footage to our newswire. Viewers can also log comments that appear below articles allowing for open debate. To read more or to post your own article, visit www.nyc.indymedia.org or www.indymedia.org.

AIDS Activists Crash Global Business Council Gala

BY JOHN RILEY

During multiple disruptions of the awards ceremony Wednesday June 12 of the Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS, members of the AIDS activist group ACT UP and Health GAP demanded that multinational corporations like Coca-Cola pay for medicines for employees in developing countries facing death from untreated HIV disease.

While activists inside the gala interrupted the ceremony, confronting members of Anglo-American, Coca-Cola, and other companies with massive workforces in Africa, other ACT UP members chanted from bullhorns while floating alongside the gala at Pier 60 in a boat "Coke lies, workers die, AIDS treatment now!" The ceremony, sponsored by the Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS, was emceed by Dan Rather and attended by Kofi Annan, Bill Clinton, Dick Holbrooke, and other luminaries.

http://nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=26130

Speech by Fidel Castro, June 10, 2002

BY CUBA VA

For many years and until September 11, the Cuban American National Foundation financed, organized and publicized countless terrorist actions and plans to murder Cuban leaders. Today, that same organization continues to fund the defense, protection and impunity of the worst terrorists while waiting for the Cuban Revolution to be destroyed by the United States. Everybody knows this, both in Miami and the White House. Mr. Bush's intimate relationship with these terrorists completely undermines his moral authority and disqualifies him as a world leader to fight against terrorism.

I don't think that a fascist regime can be established in the United States. Serious mistakes have been made and injustices committed in the framework of its political system — many of them still persist — but the American people still have a number of institutions and traditions, as well as educational, cultural and ethical values that would hardly allow that to happen. The risk exists in the international arena.

http://nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=25997

Greens Call on Bloomberg Not to Trash Recycling

BY MARK DUNLEA

The Green Party today called upon Mayor Bloomberg to abandon his threat to stop recycling of metal, glass and plastics in New

York City for 18 months. The Greens urged the City Council to restore funding for recycling and stand firm on not amending Local Law 19.

The Greens urged city residents to call the City Council to save recycling, pointing out that it is hypocritical for the Mayor to announce that he plans to come out with a new long-term plan for solid waste management by July 19th while he is proposing to eliminate recycling by July 1.

http://nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=26073

Taxi Drivers Unite Against War

BY PETER HOLDERNESS



Taxi Worker Alliance organizers estimated over 500 people, including many drivers, came to build resistance to America's dirty war and its repression of immigrant communities.

Saturday, June 9, 2002,
Coney Island Ave.

http://nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=26097

Manifesto of the Seville Lock-In

BY ANONYMOUS (ENGLISH TRANSLATION)

Those in charge have imposed a siege on Seville.

Comrades from all over the world have been detained at the Spanish borders and at points of access to the city. Secret police who read the newspaper upside-down and who are cooking in the heat under their sad uniforms intimidate people with their arsenal, identify them, control their belongings and peer into their privacy. Propaganda about supposed activist violence and intimidation of the local population is distributed by the authorities. The siege on truth to protect their lies. Just like in a war. They have converted Seville into one more setting in the global war.

Disobedients from all over the world, a diversity of collectives, movements, people, have come together here in Seville, and through this act of disobedience we make public:

Our support for the lock-in of immigrants in the University of San Pablo de Olavide....Their lock-in is a political tool of disobedience which demonstrates the emergence of a political subject, the struggle of migrant workers in the context of globalization.

Seville, June 22, 2002

http://italy.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=57809

LETTERS

June 26, 2002

To the *Indy*

We at the Street Harassment Project were very dismayed when we picked up the June 2002 print edition of the *Indy*. The front page teaser to an article about our group, which read "Sex and the City - Hey baby, check out this story" served to trivialize the issue and perpetuate the reality of street harassment. The reality is that street harassment, sexual assault and rape are not about sex—they're about violence, sexism and misogyny. How about titles such as "Sexism and the City" or "Violence and the City"? Sadly, the *Indy* chose to trivialize the issue by making it out to be something fun and entertaining—just like the TV show, right?

If the article was about any other issue, we doubt that you would have printed, say, a racist or homophobic harassment on the front page of your paper, but the *Indy*'s choice insinuates that violence against women is an issue to be taken light-heartedly and seen as vaguely cute. The daily reality of street harassment, as

experienced by women, is invasive, threatening, annoying, terrorizing, angering... Your use of harassment as a teaser displays either an extremely poor judgment or an extreme lack of regard for women's issues. Thanks for helping us prove that issues of sexism and violence against women are still not taken as seriously as they need to be, even in the "left."

Sincerely,
The Street Harassment Project
(www.streetharassmentproject.org)

The Indy Responds:

We appreciate the concerns raised by this letter. Harassment is an important issue which bears directly on the safety of the city. The cover teaser was not intended to slight or trivialize the issue of sexual harassment. It was intended, as all teasers are, to draw readers to the story. And it did so. The content of the article itself attests to the seriousness and gravity with which the *Indy* views this issue.

June 4, 2002

Dear friends,

I was shocked to read the report in February's *Indy* about the World Social Forum. The beginning of the story says that police behavior there was excellent. I wonder if that was written by someone who was actually there?

The very first day, a group of 600 anarchists and anti-authoritarians were heavily repressed by police. At the end of the forum nine activists were arrested, beaten up and two were TORTURED at the police station.

All this was reported by IMC Brazil, but alternative media was silent because it compromised the organizers' image. But I honestly didn't expect that from Indymedia — New York or anywhere else.

Pablo Ortellado, IMC Brazil

*Letters to the Editor may be sent by email to imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org or be mailed to The *Indy*, 34 E. 29th St. 2nd Floor, NY, NY 10016*

LOCAL

RENTS RISING

Landlord Expenses Dropping, But City Board OKs Hiking Rates up to 4%

BY H. GEORGE RUBENSTEIN

To the tune of "Roll the Union On" about 300 tenant activists sang "We're gonna roll the rents back" and, to the melody of "Waltzing Matilda," they sang "Bloodsucking Landlords." In the end, on June 27, at the U.S. Customs House in downtown Manhattan, neither the rapture nor the rancor of tenants stayed New York City's Rent Guidelines Board (RGB). They voted rent increases of 2 percent on one-year leases and 4 percent on two-year leases for some 1.5 million rent-stabilized apartments and 2.5 million tenants.

Tenant organizations, including the Metropolitan Council on Housing, and Tenants and Neighbors, had demanded a freeze or rollback of rents for apartments, lofts and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels. The rates, while lower than last year's 4 and 6 percent increases, come to a city sunk in recession and grief.

"I am disabled," testified Bill Hunter, a Hell's Kitchen SRO dweller, at an RGB hearing on June 26, "but I feel no different from other tenants. We're all disabled by these rent increases. Those who've stayed in New York since 9/11 have stayed because they love New York and want to live and die here. In a time of war, let's rally around our city's first line of defense — its tenants. Just decrease the rents."

Although they dispute it, landlords have enjoyed, for the first time in over 30 years of record, a decline in their annual operating expenses. Although heating oil prices

rose significantly over the past two years, exceptionally mild winters actually helped bring about a 36 percent decrease in owners' fuel costs, according to Rent Guidelines Board research, which is based on the U.S. Consumer Price Index.

The landlords, however, claim that capital upgrades and insurance rates, driven largely by terrorist scares, have devoured any profits they might have enjoyed. In a word, Mike McKee of Tenants and Neighbors dismisses such claims as: "B.S."

RGB landlord representative Harold Lubell continued to plead the landlords' case by emphasizing the gravity of their financial predicaments over those of ordinary tenants.

Lubell dismissed reports of widespread city poverty and homelessness as "blindsided" and as "pandering platitudes, which distort the size" of the problems. His principal ally, Vincent Castellano, with the alacrity of a cheerfully evil heavyweight wrestler, bellowed about "taxpayers' dollars going to support legal aid attorneys representing tenants, while hard-pressed landlords pay their own legal bills."

"Think of it, New York," said tenant representative Adrienne Holder, to wild cheers, "everyone knows, including the landlords, that this is the year for a rent *decrease*, to prevent unreasonable and repressive exactions. Average net profits for landlords were at 44 percent last year, while 150,000 jobs were lost from December through March ... Half of all rent stabilized tenants have incomes of less than \$27,000 a year. There are 33,000 people, including 14,000

children, sleeping in homeless shelters every night, the worst ever. When is enough enough?"

The standing ovation that followed, along with Holder's motions to decrease or freeze rents, went unheeded.

Only after hearing disturbing testimony about owner Hank Fried, who netted over \$1.6 million from several mid-Manhattan SROs last year, did the RGB vote to freeze SRO rents. Fried hired "Ziggy," an unlicensed plumber and electrician to do some distinctly sub-standard work off the books. Moreover, management didn't trust the tenants — aged, ill of limb or of mind, with frequent amnesia about rent receipts and without security of a vocation — to pay anything but cash.

Hard-pressed small-scale housing owners also get dragged under by a handful of big-timers, who control 70 percent of the apartments in the city.

One such owner, Deborah Moore, explained "I believe in fairer housing" but "I've sunk three mortgages into rehabilitating my small brownstone since 1970. I'm now a senior citizen. I can't command the income I had during my career, and I can't crawl around on my hands and knees cleaning bathrooms either."

The RGB still raised rents on lofts by 1 and 2 percent. Even "luxury" units, where electricity and gas heat are provided by the owners, were subjected to rent increases of 50 to 150 percent.

The average monthly rent for a rent-stabilized apartment already stands at \$822.

CRUMBLING ROCK

Support Wavers for 29-year-old Drug Laws

BY ARMAND SAMOS AND MARK PICKENS

Miguel Acosta, a 37-year-old Harlem resident, knows firsthand about the harsh consequences of the Rockefeller Drug Laws.

"The Rockefeller Drug Laws are no joke. I'm living proof of that," said Acosta. In 1988, Acosta was arrested for possession of four ounces of cocaine and sentenced to 15 years to life in prison. It was Acosta's first offense of any kind, but the judge had no discretion in determining his sentence due to the laws' mandatory sentencing rules. "The judge had no choice but to sentence me [to 15 years]," said Acosta.

The Rockefeller Drug Laws were enacted in 1973 under then Gov. Nelson Rockefeller. They significantly increased prison sentences for drug possession and established mandatory sentencing rules that judges must follow. Class A-I felon convictions, which included Acosta's, require a minimum 15-year sentence for possessing just four ounces of drugs like cocaine and heroin; for Class A-I with intent to sell, one need only have two ounces on their person. An individual may receive a maximum life sentence for committing the same felony.

Moreover, these compulsory sentences require judges to disregard background, role in the offense or potential threat to society in administering punishments. Under the Rockefeller Drug Laws, judges are only allowed to increase the sentence above the specified minimum, not decrease it. For possession of 500 milligrams, the minimum sentence is one year.

Critics of the laws claim that their effect falls most

heavily on people of color. While statistics show that the majority of drug users and sellers are white, 94 percent of the approximately 19,000 drug offenders currently in New York State prisons are black or Latino, according to the Correctional Association of New York.

"The whole system is essentially racist in its application," said Bob Perry of the New York Civil Liberties Union. "If middle and upper class white people were being arrested and incarcerated at this rate for the use and possession of small amounts of drugs, then you'd see reform of these laws immediately."

Among the opponents of the Rockefeller Drug Laws are several former Republican state senators — John Dunne, Douglas Barclay and former Senate Majority Leader Warren Anderson — who originally sponsored the laws but now oppose them.

"It got to the point where it wasn't working. If you haven't solved the problem, you've got to start thinking about how you're going to do it," said Barclay.

In light of the growing opposition to the Rockefeller Drug Laws, the Democrat-controlled State Assembly has proposed a reform bill in which some sentencing discretion is returned to judges and about \$120 million annually will be allocated to alternative punishments and drug treatment. However, under the proposed bill, "judges have no discretion in ... cases where the drug offender has violence in his [or] her background and in all cases where minors are involved." The assembly also fails to make the reforms fully retroactive.

Gov. Pataki also has a proposal to change the Rockefeller Drug Laws. The governor calls for more



HARLEM RESIDENTS demand repeal of Rockefeller Drug Laws at a June 15 protest.

judicial discretion over cases concerning low-level offenders but does not sufficiently allow mitigating circumstances to factor into an individual's case. Nor does it reduce sentence length or provide enough funding for community-based drug treatment programs, says Drop the Rock, a coalition of legislators and community activists dedicated to repealing the Rockefeller Drug Laws.

Drop The Rock supports the position of Assembly member Jeffriion L. Aubry, who chairs the Committee on Corrections and is the former chair of the Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus. Aubry's repeal bill aims to restore full sentencing discretion to trial judges, make sentencing reform retroactive, expand available funding to alternatives to incarceration like drug treatment and reduce sentences for offenders.

"Safeguarding communities and protecting families from drug trafficking and drug abuse are important public interests," said Jamie Fellner, director of Human Rights Watch's U.S. Program. "But the means chosen to combat drugs should not violate human rights."

FRED ASKEW

JULY 2002

THE INDEPENDENT PAGE 3

SECURITY AND BROKEN FAMILIES SURROUND INS DETENTIONS

In the second week of June, a family of five living in Edison, N.J. was torn apart when the father, an Egyptian citizen living in the United States for over 10 years, was abducted in the middle of the night and detained without due process by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). He is the sole breadwinner for his family.

According to individuals familiar with the case, the man will probably be deported to Egypt after months of indefinite detention in a county jail, based on the minor visa violation for which he was arrested.

His case is just one among over a thousand from the greater New York area in the aftermath of Sept. 11. Hundreds of families from Muslim, South Asian and Arab communities have suffered.

Meanwhile, on June 12 a New Jersey state appeals court ruled unanimously that the county jails are under no obligation to publicly report the names or statuses of any detained immigrants.

Moreover, the INS refuses to return phone calls or answer letters from outreach groups demanding answers about the policies or individuals detained, according to Adam Carroll of the Islamic Circle of New York.

Yet activist groups such as the Stop The Disappearances Campaign and the Coalition for The Human Rights of Immigrants continue to combat the detentions with weekly demonstrations at the Brooklyn Detention Center, "know your rights" trainings, fundraising for families left without a breadwinner, and letter writing campaigns to government officials.

QUEENS BUS WORKERS TO BOSSSES: TAKE A HIKE

There's been no halt to the walkout by 1,500 drivers and mechanics of the Queens Surface, Jamaica, and Triboro Coach bus lines, which began June 17. Transit Workers Local 100 went on strike after going without a contract for 18 months, without a raise for 30 months, and after the city appeared to renege on a health care stipulation in a contract pending from a February strike.

City Council members, with Queens Borough President Helen Marshall, visited the picketers and urged Mayor Bloomberg to intervene with the privately managed franchises. The mayor declined the entreaties, saying he was "sorry to see the public suffering because of a private dispute."

City Council Transportation Committee Chair John Liu characterized the mayor's position as "facetious." "Public funds subsidize the bus lines to the tune of \$150 million per year. The buses are owned by the city, and routes and fares are dictated by the city," he said.

VILLAGE VOICE PREPARES FOR STRIKE

Unionized workers at the Village Voice have authorized a strike, if necessary, against new corporate owners who are attempting to slash employees' health and retirement benefits. The workers' current contract expires on June 30. "Management at this point has made no significant positive offers," said Andrea de Urquiza, Organizer of UAW 2110.

CUNY IMMIGRANTS WIN TUITION ROLBACK

Responding to student protests, Gov. Pataki plans to sign legislation that reverses the City University of New York's (CUNY) anti-immigrant tuition policy announced after Sept. 11.

The 3,000 undocumented immigrants who attend CUNY and the State University of New York will again be eligible to pay the reduced in-state resident tuition of \$3,200, half the non-resident \$6,800 tuition.

GARDENS IN PERIL

Backroom Deals May Displace Community Gardeners

BY CATHY BUSSEWITZ

Three human-sized ladybugs and four multi-colored butterflies flapped their wings and landed outside the offices of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) on June 10. Joined by puppet-toting Bronx gardeners, one protester climbed a tree hanging signs that read, "Homes and Gardens Go Together," and "Racial Justice — Make All Gardens Permanent," while others locked down to trees, chanting for an hour and a half. "More gardens, more trees — New York City has got to breathe!" they sang before being hauled away on charges of reckless endangerment.

"The HPD employees who came outside were very curious," said Michael Stipkala, a More Gardens! coalition activist who grew up in the Midwest, and does service work in the Bronx. "Most were very positive, and a lot of them didn't know how many gardens we might lose, because the process is happening so quickly."

Indeed, HPD employees are not the only ones in the dark about negotiations happening between HPD lawyers, Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and Eliot Spitzer, the state attorney general who filed a lawsuit that has been protecting the community gardens for three years.

A long-time supporter of environmental causes and the gardens, Spitzer filed the suit in May 1999 when the city planned to auction 115 community gardens without an environmental review, leading to the transfer of 113 to the New York Restoration Project, and a temporary restraining order that protected the remaining 400 gardens.

But settlements are going on now, after which the restraining order will be lifted, and the fate of approximately 400 gardens, currently held by HPD, will be determined.

"The temporary restraining order is temporary," said Tom Congdon, policy analyst for the environmental protection bureau of Spitzer's office. "The court ordered the TRO until the case is settled. The city and state have been in negotiations for a while. It's difficult to determine when a settlement will be reached."

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

No one can say for sure what they are discussing. But two proposals are on the table, neither of which please gardeners.

The first, the Mass Transfer Proposal, was proposed by HPD at the request of Mayor Bloomberg. It would settle the question of garden ownership in one swift action. Under this plan, 230 gardens would be handed over to the New York Restoration Project to be indefinitely preserved, and the rest would be bulldozed for development. HPD reports development plans for 131 gardens so far. However, an unnamed source has told the *Indyendent* that the number of saved gardens would be reduced to 150, and passed to Green Thumb, preserving their federal funding.

The South Bronx, East Brooklyn and Harlem are believed to be the neighborhoods that would be most effected. Melrose, in the South Bronx, whose population is 96 percent Latino and African American, holds less than a quarter acre of green space per thousand people, while Park Slope, Brooklyn, whose population is 28 percent Latino and African American, has more than three acres per thousand people, according to the Council on

the Environment of New York City.

It's unclear how HPD determines the gardens it wants to develop, especially considering the number of vacant lots in neighborhoods like Melrose that have the most threatened gardens. There are 31 threatened gardens and 180 vacant lots of various shapes and sizes in the area between 151st and 165th Streets, and Courtland and Third Avenues. Asked why they are developing on gardens in light of this ratio, HPD sent out a pre-written response.

"You can't build housing on every lot because most are single lots, 15 feet wide, making them uneconomical for affordable housing," says Carole Abrams, an HPD spokesperson. "Others are one-foot-wide slivers, have no street access, are not zoned for residential use, or are partly submerged by water."

"THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW"

A second proposal by the Municipal Arts Society and New Yorkers for Parks would require garden development plans to go through the Uniform Land Use Renewal Process (ULURP), and would provide an opportunity for gardeners to apply for permanent status or, if denied, a two-year lease.

Led by City Councilman Jose Serrano, who represents the Melrose section of the Bronx, the proposal was crafted into Bill #206, which is commonly called "There Ought to Be a Law."

Though the bill has yet to go to committee for approval, it has been well received by council members. Already, 21 out of 51 council members have signed on, including

many on the committee that would approve the bill's introduction. Twenty six votes are needed for a majority.

Critics of the bill note that while the proposal may slow down the process, it will leave even Green Thumb gardens vulnerable to development. If this happens, the bill states, the Department of City Planning will work with groups to identify an alternative site.

Gardeners in Melrose know what it's like to have to "move" a garden. Luis Rodriguez, who maintained the recently bulldozed Cabo Rojo garden, has had to re-create his garden several times. Townhouses with car parks now stand on the site he gardened just a few years ago. A few blocks over, the 17-year old Alvarez Community Garden is bursting with roses, yet at risk of becoming a cul-de-sac.

Gardeners and activists are eager for a city council hearing since they didn't have a hand in shaping the bill. Such a hearing is unlikely until the end of summer due to ongoing budget negotiations. In the meantime, the city may strike a deal with Spitzer before a hearing ever takes place.

Community gardeners want their rights defined. They also believe that the law should preserve existing gardens and support the creation of new ones. Aresh Javadi and the More Gardens! team are creating a portfolio of garden photos and stories, which they will present to the city. They want to see legislation that takes care of the people who do the city's greening work.

"The gardeners are the true revolutionaries," says Javadi, "planting the seeds of revolution one tree at a time. They are taking back the land that was stolen from the indigenous people, and returning it to the community."

For more information, see moregardens.org or call 917.518.9987.



"TELLTALE SIGNS"

America Drifts Toward Police State

BY MIKE BURKE

He has not been charged with a crime. He cannot see a lawyer. He is barred from seeing or challenging incriminating evidence. And no court is allowed to hear his case.

As a result, Jose Padilla, a 31-year-old Brooklyn-born U.S. citizen, may spend the rest of his life in solitary confinement in a military prison without trial.

The Padilla case, along with the return of COINTELPRO tactics at the FBI and the erosion of attorney-client privileges, highlights how the government's war on civil liberties and the Constitution has escalated to a once unimaginable degree. (COINTELPRO, or Counter Intelligence Program, was a secret FBI initiative from 1956 to 1971 that allowed the surveillance and harassment of thousands of activists.)

"If present trends continue, it is likely that America will drift toward national identification cards, a national police force, and more extensive military involvement in domestic affairs," wrote Timothy Lynch in his study, "Breaking the Vicious Cycle: Preserving Our Liberties While Fighting Terrorism." "That ought to give pause to people of goodwill from all across the political spectrum — since those are the telltale signs of societies that are unfree."

Not since the Civil War when Abraham Lincoln approved the rounding up of hundreds of Unionists who opposed the war has a president so disregarded the fundamental right of habeas corpus — the right for citizens to challenge their arrest. But under Bush's "enemy combatant" policy, citizens such as Padilla, who was detained in Chicago for allegedly planning to build a radioactive dirty bomb, and Yaser Esam Hamdi, who was born in Louisiana and captured in Afghanistan, simply have no rights.

The Justice Department argues that even the Supreme Court cannot question the president's treatment of enemy combatants.

"The court may not second-guess the military's enemy combatant determination [because it would] create 'a conflict between judicial and military opinion highly comforting to enemies of the United States,'" the Justice Department wrote in a brief in the Hamdi case.

Critics fear such rulings border on totalitarianism.

"It is scarier than the dirty bomb," Hamdi's court-appointed attorney Frank W. Dunham Jr. told the *Washington Post*. "Now the government can label somebody something and then throw the key away forever."

There is also fear that the government will use fabricated or trumped-up evidence — which never has to be publicly shown — to detain citizens indefinitely.

Questions abound over the strength of the government's case against Padilla. On June 10, in a special press conference from Moscow, Attorney General John Ashcroft announced the capture of Padilla, who had already been in custody for a month. Ashcroft claimed Padilla was the key figure in an "unfolding terrorist plot to attack the United States by exploding a radioactive 'dirty bomb.'" But within hours top Bush administration officials began downplaying Ashcroft's statements.

FBI Director Robert Mueller and others countered that Padilla did little more than discuss the plot and download inaccurate instructions on building a dirty bomb.

"Clearly, he is not the deadly, skilled operative

Attorney General John Ashcroft seemed to be describing," concluded *Time* magazine.

Nonetheless, Padilla may remain imprisoned without trial for the rest of his life.

EXPANDED SURVEILLANCE POWERS

For activists involved in the civil rights and anti-war movements of the '60s and '70s, it is déjà vu all over again as the Justice Department has expanded the FBI's role in domestic surveillance, marking the return and legalization of COINTELPRO tactics.

"The new guidelines will trash a central protection against government fishing expeditions by ending the requirement that law enforcement agencies have at least a scintilla of evidence — or even a hunch — of a crime before engaging in certain investigative activities," the ACLU reported.

As evidence continues to emerge that existing surveillance methods should have tipped off governmental officials that plans for a massive attack were in the works last summer, many have questioned the need for FBI to return to J. Edgar Hoover-era dirty tricks. The failure was not so much in the government's ability to collect data as in the FBI, CIA and NSA's ability to make sense of the intelligence.

THE LAWYERS

Lynne Stewart, a well-known radical New York lawyer, gained national headlines in April when the Justice Department charged her with conspiring with terrorists. Stewart faces 40 years in prison for allegedly allowing her client, Sheik Omar Abdel Rahman, to send messages

to his followers via the court-appointed translator and for her public statement communicating his views. Abdel Rahman is the blind Egyptian cleric serving a life sentence for conspiring to blow up New York landmarks in 1993.

The charges stem from secret governmental monitoring of Stewart's conversations with her clients. To bolster their case, officials also raided her office, seizing confidential files.

Out on bail, Stewart continues to publicly condemn the Bush Administration's war on terrorism.

"Angela Davis said: if they come for me in the morning, they'll be back for you tonight," she said recently. "And that is the way we are living now in America."



BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING.

COMMUNITY REPORTING WORKSHOP

WANT TO JOIN THE INDYMEDIA REVOLUTION BUT AREN'T SURE HOW?

The *Indydependent* will be holding all-day community reporting workshops at our office on Saturdays in July. We will review the basics of journalism and then explore lead writing, interviewing, story research and how to develop news and human interest stories. There will be lots of hands-on exercises, writing and small discussion groups.

RSVP: 212-684-8112
or email imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org

FBI GOES TO THE LIBRARY

The FBI has begun checking public library records for the first time since the 1970s. In a recent University of Illinois survey, 85 of 1,020 public libraries reported they had been asked by federal or local law enforcement officials for patron information. Such searches are now legal under the PATRIOT Act signed into law last October. The same law also makes it a criminal offense for librarians to reveal the nature or extent of such visits.

Some libraries are resisting the FBI's legal pressure with subterfuge, a popular tactic. Judith Krug, the American Library Association's Director for Intellectual Freedom, encourages worried librarians to only keep the records they need and discard those that reveal which patron checked out a book and for how long.

"People are scared and they think that by giving up their rights, especially their right to privacy, they will be safe," Krug said. "But it wasn't the right to privacy that let terrorists into our nation. It had nothing to do with libraries or library records."

COURT STRIKES DOWN "TERRORIST" DESIGNATION

U.S. District Judge Robert Takasugi struck down a 1996 law that authorized the government to designate groups or individuals as "terrorist" and prosecute Americans who aid them, according to the *Washington Times*.

In a virtually unnoticed mid-June ruling, Judge Takasugi declared the law "unconstitutional on its face" since it does not allow suspect groups to challenge the terrorist designation in an open hearing.

"We obviously disagree with this particular ruling," said Justice Department spokesman Bryan Sierra. "We have not yet decided if we will appeal."

The government's case against "American Taliban" John Walker Lindh, based on the 1996 law, may be affected by the ruling.

THE MEDIA: WHITE, MALE, REPUBLICAN, CORPORATE

A new study by Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) shows that 92 percent of all U.S. sources interviewed on the nightly network news in 2001 were white, 85 percent were male and, where party affiliation was identifiable, 75 percent were Republican. Big business, too, was over-represented. In a year in which the country lost 2.4 million jobs, corporate representatives appeared about 35 times more frequently than did union representatives.

GOVERNMENT KILLING INTERNET RADIO STARS

Thousands of Internet radio broadcasters are expected to shut down due to the government's new royalty fee structure that will bankrupt all but the "multi-billion-dollar corporations like AOL, Yahoo!, and Microsoft," according to saveinternetradio.org

Retroactively to October 1998, stations must pay up to .07 cents per listener, per song owned by the major record labels.

Based on this structure, the annual fees are expected to be 200 to 300 percent higher than most webcasters' total revenue. To keep running, a 24-7 webcast with 1,000 listeners would have to pay on average of \$21 per hour, or \$500 per day. Like traditional radio stations, web broadcasters already pay 3.5 percent of their revenue to songwriters and publishers. Traditional radio stations have never paid royalties to major record labels. The fees apply to all profit and nonprofit webcasters, though National Public Radio affiliates will be charged a rate of only .02 cents per listener. The Corporation of Public Broadcasting has agreed to pick up all of their charges.

VICTORY

TURNING THE TROLLS INTO STONE: STRATEGIES FOR THE GLOBAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

BY STARHAWK

In Tolkien's book, *The Hobbit*, Bilbo Baggins and his friends the dwarves are caught by trolls and about to be stewed for dinner. They are saved by the wizard Gandalf, who keeps the trolls busy talking and squabbling until daylight. Sunlight turns trolls to stone.

That fantasy story could be a good model for a direct action strategy for the global justice movement. Essentially, we're all in the stew pot, with the trolls of corporate power feasting on the resources and labor of the world. But global corporate capitalism depends on hiding its true nature and functioning in the shadows. It cloaks itself in the rhetoric and semblance of democracy. Exposed to light, it cannot continue to function.

What is corporate globalization? It's an ideology that elevates corporate profit to the highest value and determining factor for all human activity, individual and collective. It says that corporations must be unfettered in their pursuit of profit, that all natural and human resources should be open to exploitation, that services and infrastructures once collectively provided by governments should become arenas of profit making, and that while some people will gain more than others under this regime, following this program will make everyone richer and benefit all.

Corporate globalization is implemented by certain institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, that impose their constraints on the heavily indebted countries of the third world in return for participation in the global economy. It is enacted through trade agreements such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), the proposed FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas — the extension of NAFTA throughout the hemisphere), and many others, including the global GATT (Global Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), enforced by the World Trade Organization. These agreements and institutions override democratically made laws of countries, allowing them to be struck down in decisions by a tribunal of the WTO, which can rule, for example, that a law restricting imports of goods made with child labor is "restraint of trade" and, thus, not allowed.

Many of them allow corporations to sue governments for loss of projected profits if laws restrict them: a Canadian corporation has won a judgment of hundreds of millions of dollars from the State of California for banning an additive in gasoline that pollutes ground water. A U.S. corporation has sued Canada for banning an additive that causes brain cancer in children. This program is backed by the vast military and police power of the state — primarily the U.S. but aided by our friends. The "war on terror" is the perfect excuse for extending that power until it becomes a true global hegemony.

This program is problematic on a number of different levels: it is blatantly unjust, it runs counter to every human impulse toward compassion, generosity and mutuality, it contradicts the teachings of every religion or system of social ethics, it is destroying the basic life support systems of the planet, and it doesn't work. It allows corporations free movement across borders to seek the lowest common denominator of wages and regulations, and lowers the global standard of living for workers everywhere. It

appropriates the resources that should belong to all and concentrates wealth and power in fewer and fewer hands. In fact, it creates misery, poverty and despair for billions.

Trying to counter that system may seem an overwhelming and hopeless task. How do we confront a system that can commandeer such vast economic resources, control the major media and mobilize all the military, police and judicial power of the state in its defense?

As powerful as the system seems, it rests on the compliance and tacit consent of the very people it exploits. The vast, vast numbers of us who don't truly benefit from the system support it through our participation. Without our labor, without our obedience, without our willingness to police ourselves, the system cannot function.

The public complies with this system in part because the system hides its true workings under fancy rhetoric, obscure economic theory and the trappings of democracy. Trolls breed in the dark.

So a strategy for global justice involves exposing the trolls to light: telling the truth about the system, showing

**"The most powerful actions
are those in which we
create confrontations that
also embody our vision."**

work. Ultimately, our goal is to undermine the legitimacy of the system and erode the tacit consent that supports it.

There are many, many groups, from organizations such as Public Citizen or the Council of Canadians to independent media, working on shining that light. But in a world overloaded with information, how do we get people overburdened with messages of fear and urgency to pay attention?

Educators speak of the concept of the "teachable moment," that instant when a bored and apathetic student suddenly becomes eager and able to learn. People become teachable when they realize that they have a need for information.

That is one of the key purposes of protest: to create so much excitement, so much urgency and drama around an issue that people who have previously tuned it out suddenly feel a need to pay attention. But people are also controlled by fear. We might hate the system, but we also depend upon it. What will happen to us if we act against it? How can we trust those urging us to take action, or believe that what they propose will be better?

People comply with the system because they don't see an alternative or believe that they have any choice. Systems of control always work by limiting our perceptions of our options. Our challenge as a movement is to delegitimize the current system, pose a wider range of choices, empower people to risk opposing the current system and to embrace an alternative vision.

We've been relatively good at shining a spotlight, creating drama and delegitimizing the current system. In the two-and-a-half years since Seattle, we've awakened public awareness of many of the institutions of corporate globalization, shifted the terms of debate and undercut the unquestioning acceptance of their policies. We've been less successful at posing a clear, alternative vision and building public trust.

Trust is built over time, of course. The global justice movement is not centered on charismatic leaders or ongoing institutions that give a face to trust. It's an amorphous, ever-evolving, self-organizing mass. But if people involved in the movement devote time, attention and their skills as organizers to their home issues and support local community-based organizations as well as large summit actions, trust can grow.

But trust has to grow from a vision. And I believe we do actually have a clear alternative to the ideology of global corporate capitalism: we stand for democracy, community and true abundance.

Democracy means that people have a voice in the decisions that affect them, including economic decisions. Democracy requires time and public space and quality education and freedom of information. And democracy means that no group can be excluded from power because of race, gender, sexual orientation, age, physical ability or any other "ism."

We stand for the right of communities to control their own destinies and resources, whether that is an indigenous community preserving its land and culture or a neighborhood deciding to keep its local hospital open. Enterprises and businesses must be rooted in communities and accountable to them.

We say that real abundance means protecting the life support systems of the planet, that there are things too precious to be bought and sold for profit, from ancient rainforests to the water that sustains all life. Abundance does not come from the extraction and concentration of wealth, but from its widest possible distribution. True abundance means security, and that can only come from an understanding that we have a common responsibility for each other, to see each other through hard times and support each other through misfortune.

We also say that democracy, community and true abundance are the real antidote to the despair that breeds terrorism, and the best means of assuring our global security.

When we think about actions and tactics, we need to consider how they fit with our overall strategy. We need to create enough of a ruckus to arouse people's attention, while making sure it's the system that gets delegitimized, not us. Different tactics and actions serve different needs.

Protests that are safe, permitted and legal serve an important purpose: they mobilize people who might otherwise be afraid to take action. They give people a way to overcome fear, feel a sense of unity and speak out, and can embody our vision and build trust.

Direct action, actions that directly confront oppressive power, actively withdraw our consent from the system, create drama and confrontation and urgency, and often make the violence inherent in the system visible. My own generally preferred set of tactics involves nonviolent direct action, because they allow us to create both urgency and trust. Nonviolent actions can be openly organized, letting us mobilize more people and encourage people to move beyond fear and take higher risks.

The most powerful actions are those in which we create confrontations that also embody our vision. When we live the alternatives, in our organizing, in our coalition building, in our daily lives, in our courage to act, we become the sunlight that can freeze the trolls in their tracks.

Starhawk is a longtime activist and author of nine books including The Fifth Sacred Thing.

Court Rules Twice Against Death Justices Bow to Increasing Opposition

BY GABRIEL WOODHOUSE

Oliver Cruz was 33 years old with an IQ of 64 and considered functionally illiterate by clinical standards. Psychologists estimated that his mental and emotional age equivalent was that of a 12-year-old boy. Convicted of murder by a Texas jury, Cruz was executed by lethal injection on Aug. 9, 2000, despite the uncontested evidence of his developmental disability.

Cruz was one of at least 35 individuals with mental retardation, and 782 persons overall, who have been executed since the U.S. resumed the practice of capital punishment in 1976.

In late June, the Supreme Court issued a pair of landmark rulings that mark the biggest victories for anti-death penalty activists in a generation.

On June 20 the Supreme Court declared in *Atkins v. Virginia* that a "national consensus" had formed on the issue and ruled that execution of those with mental retardation violates the Eighth Amendment's protection against cruel and unusual punishment.

In the second case, the Court held in *Ring v. Arizona* that only juries, not judges, can issue death sentences.

Of the nation's 3,700 death row inmates, as many as one in five could have their sentences overturned because of the court's decisions.

The two rulings, in concert with state moratoriums on executions in Maryland and Illinois, as well as recent legislation proposed by Sen. Russ Feingold (D-Wis.) and Rep. Jesse L. Jackson (D-Ill.), represent major successes of grassroots activism that have helped create a national dialogue on the problems of capital punishment, according to many groups dedicated to abolishing the death penalty in the U.S.

Joe Moreno, an organizer with the Chicago chapter of the Campaign to End the Death Penalty (CEDP), explained that "agitating, activating and educating the public to think about the issues surrounding capital punishment has been our goal since our inception in the late 1990s, and we have demonstrated just how powerful that work can be."

Moreno emphasized that by focusing on educating the general public about the death penalty through activism and outreach, rather than lobbying politicians, CEDP and similar groups have made the problematic aspects of capital punishment more visible and understandable to people.

"Our major focus is on various forms of education through creative approaches. We find that the more the public knows about the death penalty, the less they support it. It's really all about bringing the issues and the facts to the table and making the realities of this horrible system more visible," Moreno said.

"One of the key things that we try to incorporate into our outreach is to really humanize the issue. For many Americans, death row is about Timothy

McVeigh. But that is the exception. When people are able to demonize capital defendants, then they remove themselves from a real discourse on the nature of the practice of state executions," he asserted.

As an example of humanizing education, CEDP has developed a program called "Live From Death Row" in which "town hall" sessions are held in different locations around the country. They are open to the public and death row inmates are available to have live phone dialogues with individuals in the audience. The dialogues are broadcast on a sound system for the entire audience to hear.

Similarly, Abe Bonowitz, executive director of Citizens United Against the Death Penalty and a long-time abolition activist, explains the need for more education and discourse on the issues.

"So many Americans have little or no information about the realities of the death penalty. That is why it is so useful when we do actions that are highly visible and generate media coverage. It gets people talking and thinking in new and different ways," said Bonowitz, who

has been arrested several times for direct action protests against capital punishment on the grounds of the Supreme Court.

Bonowitz also noted that protests and civil disobedience help to inspire those who may be sympathetic to the cause of the abolitionists but are not themselves directly involved in any grassroots action.

"Our actions are in many ways very useful internally to the abolition movement itself. Through a vigil, or a march, or even a direct petition drive, we bring it home for those who really care but are sort of on the sidelines. Visible actions can reinvigorate the spirits of the more passive abolitionists."

Mona Cadena is a field organizer with the Mid-Atlantic Regional Office of Amnesty International USA in Washington, D.C. She said that the recent high court decisions and state moratoriums really "bring us closer to the bigger question of total abolition of capital punishment in this country."

While acknowledging that the sitting Supreme Court is unlikely to reverse its 1976 ruling permitting capital punishment, Cadena offered a perspective on the current situation that provides hope and engenders action.

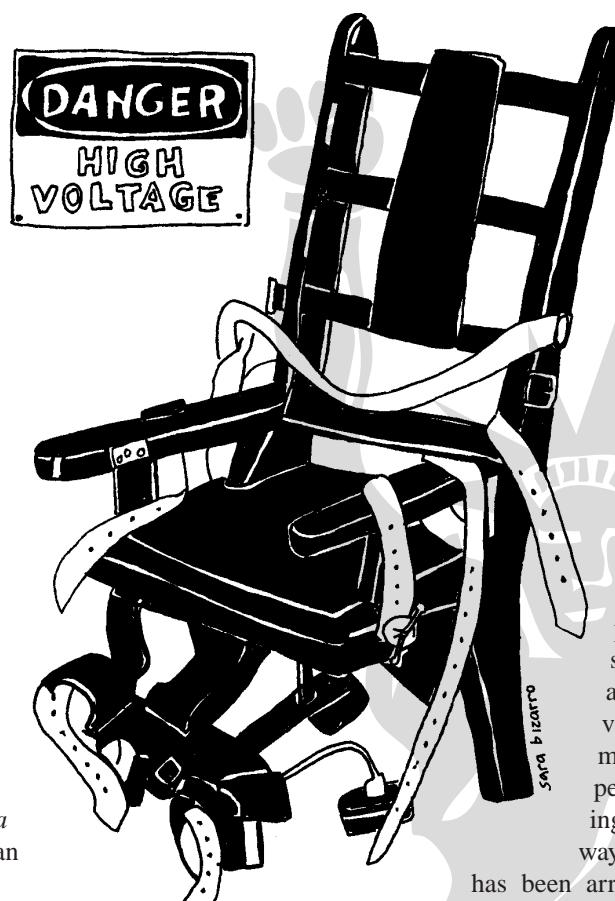
"It's a very interesting time for the anti-death penalty movement," she said. "We have been able to bring some major threads of this issue to the forefront — from race and class to disabilities to sentencing procedures and adequate representation."

"The recent Supreme Court decisions and different state initiatives and studies such as in Maryland and Illinois are important steps in an incremental approach to abolition. The national buzz and media attention serve as tools for examining the issues more critically.

"And we can see that the grassroots work has been

effective and has raised the level of debate on the death penalty. It's really encouraging for those who are out there fighting," said Cadena.

For more information or ways to get involved in fighting capital punishment, visit www.abolition.org or www.aiusa.org/abolish.



JAIL PLAN JUNKED

BY DANI MCCLAIN

Dana Kaplan's work has given her a strong impression of upstate New York. A community organizer working on rural prison issues, Kaplan recently joined forces with the upstate community of Bainbridge to help throw a wrench in the latest round of prison site negotiations.

The powerful lobby of rural interests seeking jobs and state funds is often blamed for the proliferation of prisons across the country. With the forces of globalization pushing many domestic industries south and creating a hostile environment for small farmers, prison hosting has become one of few development options available to rural areas.

Bainbridge, a former dairy farm town outside Binghamton, would seem to be a community that would jump at the chance to host a \$73 million, 276-bed maximum-security juvenile detention center. But residents looked beyond the promise of more than 300 jobs and a \$12 million payroll, despite the loss of two major industrial employers in the past five years.

Aid for residents opposing the Bainbridge site came at the advice of Tracy Huling, an expert on the impacts of prisons on rural communities and creator of the documentary *Yes In My Backyard*. Huling contacted Prison Moratorium Project (PMP), part of a national network of organizations dedicated to prison abolition.

In late October, Kaplan, PMP's rural organizer, travelled to Bainbridge to talk to local residents about the site proposal. She read through recent issues of the local daily, the *Tri-Town News*, looking for letters to the editor on the issue written by people who saw the potential problems the prison could bring.

Upon returning to New York City, Kaplan called them to discuss their concerns and offer PMP as a resource. She sent studies and anecdotal evidence from other rural prison towns across the country and highlighted the dollar-for-dollar trade-off in New York State between prisons and higher education. She also emphasized the fact that the environmental assessments usually required before the start of any large development project are often bypassed when the project is a prison.

"A prison coming to town brings all these negative things," said Kaplan. "It's not a surge in HIV rates and crime and New York City criminals. It's environmental degradation, increased domestic violence rates in the town, [and] increased alcoholism rates in the town."

Beth O'Hara, a member of the Bainbridge Concerned Citizens Council, which was established

CONTINUED ON P. 17

LEARNING NEW LESSONS

PERSPECTIVES ON COLLECTIVE ORGANIZING

BY JESSICA KAUFMAN

Last fall, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) held a “listening session” around the upcoming re-authorization of federal welfare legislation in New York City. The ostensible purpose of the session was to evaluate the effectiveness of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act. Recipients of welfare assistance were not invited.

But Sandra Williams, a mother of two who lost her job after 20 years, went anyway.

With fellow members of Community Voices Heard (CVH), a New York City-based group that organizes citizens around welfare issues, Williams protested the snubbing by officials outside the Times Square hotel where



COMMUNITY VOICES HEARD is a New York-based group that organizes citizens around welfare issues. Many of its organizers are former teachers.

the session took place. She was also a featured speaker at the demonstrators’ press conference, that lured several reporters outside from the session.

Williams appealed to HHS to listen to people affected by its policies. “We challenge Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson to experience the real deal of welfare center experiences ... HHS meetings and committees dealing with TANF [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families] re-authorizations should be open to the public. Let our voices be heard!” she shouted, as the crowd thundered support.

Williams emerged from the experience feeling positive about collective organizing, and compared it to her prior endeavors in fighting HHS.

Organizing works, says Williams, because it “puts situations face to face. It makes it personal, but it’s still collective. When I was writing my councilman concerning these issues, it changed the problem for me at that moment. But when I’d go to the welfare center it was the same thing all over again.”

In contrast, collective action produces lasting results, says Williams, and has the power to affect policies, not just circumstances.

Alex Caputo-Pearl and Kirti Baranwal, public school-teachers in the Los Angeles School District, have also turned to community organizing as a powerful way to address systemic injustices they encounter in the classroom. Caputo-Pearl and Baranwal are also founding members of the Coalition for Educational Justice (CEJ), a multiracial, grassroots organization of teachers, students and parents focused on school reform. Caputo-Pearl says teachers are in an ideal position to establish political power in low-income communities as members of organizing groups.

“[Kirti and I] came into teaching and have stayed in teaching substantially because we see schools and the educational profession as highly-strategic arenas from which to stage cutting-edge organizing projects,” says Caputo-Pearl.

“Teachers — immersed in the community, the school, students’ lives, and in unions as rank-and-file members — are strategically well-placed to build a political base.”

Though collective organizing encompasses many philosophies and strategies, they are often founded upon similar principles. Fundamentally, campaigns aim to mobilize large numbers of people around issues of community concern. Through individual or group dialogue, members identify what community issues are important, develop an agenda regarding those issues and strategize about how to make change happen. They may initiate contact with decision-makers and lawmakers lobbying them for support or pressuring them for change.

Strategizing, research and coalition building are the basis for collective group action. Actions can take limitless forms, ensuring that all members of the group are heard at every level of the policy-making process. Typical actions include: legislative briefings, accountability sessions, demonstrations and more creative direct action.

A combination of well-structured actions that mobilize large numbers around an issue can have a powerful impact, resulting in changes at the local, state and federal levels.

Some successes are small, visible changes like posting a stop sign at a busy intersection or clearing abandoned shopping carts from streets and sidewalks. Other achievements are comprehensive, policy-based victories, like presenting a piece of legislation to a lawmaker that is eventually enacted. In organizing, members actually see the fruits of their effort, and it inspires them to aim higher.

Just as public education empowers children to gain control over their adult lives, organizing empowers people of all ages to publicly exercise their rights as citizens.

“Our goal,” says Caputo-Pearl, “is to build an organization that lasts, that uncompromisingly fights for people’s rights ... and that, through direct action, demands that all branches of government respond to the voice of the people.”

SCHOOLS REJOIN COMMUNITY

BY CHRIS FLEISHER

Principal Tammy Bowling pauses when she considers the options for Washington Elementary.

“I’m always thinking of academics, so tutorials would be great,” she says, excitedly. “Or to provide financial workshops ... parents could get in on how to save money, save for college ... economic empowerment.”

Washington Elementary in Plainfield, N.J., has just completed its first year as a community school. Using public schools as a “hub,” community schools partner with local organizations and other community resources to bring focus to a community while offering experiential learning for students.

Bowling says that Washington Elementary’s partnership with Plainfield Health Clinic has been overwhelmingly successful.

“The words or adjectives that I’ve heard are ... friendly, engaging, welcoming. The students, I think, feel that their school is a special place.” She says that the parents find it convenient to have their child’s immunizations and check-ups done at the school site.

Community schools are not merely an educational experiment. According to the New Jersey Department of Community Assistance and State Planning, the idea of community schools began around the late 19th century, when progressives hoped to use community planning and design as a means to reform schools and build democratic communities based on cooperation between schools and community organizations.

By the mid-20th century, trends toward specialization — creating independent individual organizations with lit-

tle integration with other community projects — reinforced a growing separation between schools and their communities. In the past decade, however, land scarcity in urban areas has made the question of bringing centrality back to communities more urgent.

Caren Franzini, Executive Director of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, thinks community schools are simply an efficient use of resources.

“A building that closes up at three o’clock would be a waste of a facility. By being open after four in the evening, it serves the community in so many ways,” she said.

Franzini points to Patterson as an example of urban renewal through community school development. “[Patterson city developers] took what was part of downtown Patterson and converted it into a high school,” she notes. High school students now populate the downtown after school, stimulating commerce in a once-dormant area of the city.

Community schools, reports *Education Week*, in addition to making economical use of space, offer a comprehensive and holistic view of education, reduce urban sprawl, and re-invest the community with a sense of ownership over public institutions.

Community schools are gaining popularity in cities around the nation. The Knowledge Works Foundation conducted a state-wide poll in Ohio asking where people would be most willing to volunteer time. Forty-two percent of respondents answered “a neighborhood school” — almost twice as much as any other category.

The challenges lie in funding and organization. In New Jersey, though many “special needs districts” receive state funding for developing community schools,



the community alone must provide funds for additional development.

Coordinating multiple organizations to function as a viable “community” is perhaps the biggest challenge facing organizers. After her first year as a principal in a community school, Bowling says the task keeps her on her toes.

“It’s very complex and a challenge to manage,” she says. “But it’s equally rewarding to have a chance to interact with and plan and work with ... representatives from all areas.”

Though it’s too early to measure the school’s success, Bowling says the success is evident in the increased parental involvement.

“Parents are coming in for less traditional reasons beyond picking up report cards or having parent and teacher conferences. There’s a whole different level of interaction.”

In a time of rhetoric pronouncing “no child left behind,” community school organizers around the nation go beyond political threats to effect change in under-resourced areas. Despite the testing craze and demand for school accountability, Bowling takes a unique, holistic approach to addressing her students’ concerns.

“I hope that ultimately what we’re doing here will positively impact the entire community.”

PACIFICA REBELS REBUILD BATTERED RADIO NETWORK

BY JOHN TARLETON

A year ago, Duane Bradley was protesting the policies of the Pacifica Radio network. He made his living selling herbs and vitamins to Houston-area health food stores. Today, he is the general manager of Houston's Pacifica affiliate and works out of the same office he had in 1989 when he was forced to resign as program director for criticizing the network's planned shift toward more NPR-style programming.

"I truly believe in what Pacifica stands for," says Bradley, 48, who first volunteered at KPFT as a teenager in the early '70s, shortly after the station went on the air. "I believe I can effect more positive change in the world with my work at Pacifica than I can teaching people about the uses of Hawthorne berries."

The Pacifica Radio network was launched at KPFA-FM in Berkeley, California, in 1949 by World War II-era conscientious objectors who believed open dialogue was essential to creating a more pacific (hence the network's name) world. The nation's only listener-sponsored radio network grew to include stations in Los Angeles (1959), New York (1960), Houston (1970) and Washington, D.C. (1977) while giving a national voice to progressive movements. Yet, for a network founded on pacifist ideals, Pacifica has been plagued by an unusual number of internal battles over the years.

The largest, most recent battle raged through the network during much of the past decade as grassroots activists squared off against Pacifica national board members who wanted to move the network toward more upscale, mainstream programming. The crisis gained national attention in July 1999 when Pacifica shut down KPFA for three weeks and arrested over 50 staffers before relenting in the face of massive street protests. Eighteen months later, Pacifica management executed a "Christmas Coup" at WBAI in New York, firing the station's general manager and program director and then banning over two dozen producers and programmers including Amy Goodman, host of *Democracy Now!*

Besieged by protests, sit-ins, boycotts, email pressure campaigns and a flurry of lawsuits, the old Pacifica national board capitulated in an out-of-court settlement last December. "The people who knew how to organize were on our side," says historian Matthew Lasar, author of *Pacifica Radio: Rise of an Alternative Network*. "They had talkers on their side, people like Mary Frances Berry or *The Nation*. The people who knew how to organize demonstrations, print up T-shirts and buttons, pass out flyers were all on our side."

The dissidents consolidated control at a January board meeting in New York. What they found wasn't a pretty site.

"Pacifica and everything in it was a wreck," says Carol Spooner, lead plaintiff in the listener lawsuit and now a national board member herself.

The network was over \$6 million in debt and could barely pay its light bill. The outgoing board had also burned through \$10 million in cash reserves during its final year in power, Spooner said.

The new management has since reduced Pacifica's outstanding debts from \$4.8 million to \$1.3 million and has also been able to cover a \$1.5 million operating deficit

with the help of record fundraising around the network. However, according to Spooner, Pacifica will have no cash reserves at the end of the fiscal year on Sept. 30. Also, Pacifica still does not have a budget or a working accounting system.

"We blew it. We need to get our act together," Spooner says of the budget chaos. "We're a bunch of leftists who don't know how to balance a checkbook."

Spooner, 55, a legal researcher and lifelong KPFA listener, joined the fray in the summer of 1999 and convinced the California state attorney general's office to support her listener lawsuit which contended that Pacifica had illegally altered its bylaws to create a self-appointed national board. As a part of the court settlement, Pacifica's interim national board has 15 months to craft new bylaws and hold first-ever elections in its five signal areas for new local and national boards.

"The organization is really moving onto uncharted ground," says Lasar, who was a KPFA commentator during the 1980s. "By democratizing itself, it's making good on its own rhetoric. It's always praised more democracy everywhere else — in Florida, in the university, in Indonesia — everywhere except Pacifica."

What exactly that democracy will look like remains unclear. At the moment, the interim board is reviewing

three models of Pacifica governance, two kinds of membership, four ways to elect a local board, two ways to count votes and eight ways to elect a national board. KPFA has held listener elections for the past two years using a form of proportional representation that is weighted to ensure that at least 50 percent of the board's members are people of color and 50 percent are women.

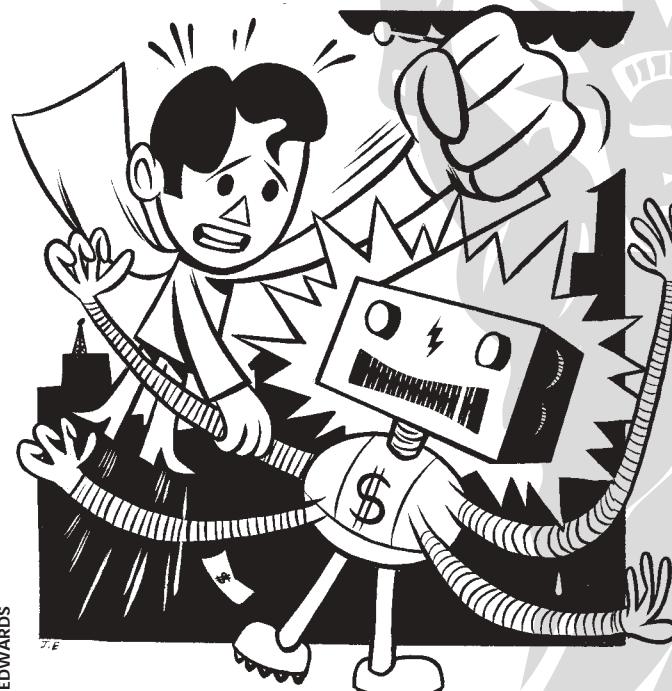
Some members of WBAI's local advisory board have proposed a constituency model of representation in which different com-

munity organizations with a stake in the station's programming would be selected to send representatives to sit on the local board. Supporters say the constituency model would bring more cultural diversity to the network while critics question how it could be implemented without cronyism.

"I think staff and producers are frightened that democratization will threaten their positions," says Rob Dickey, a New York member of the Pacifica Matters collective which airs near-weekly webcasts on Pacifica governance issues.

Of the five stations, KPFT in Houston has probably changed the most dramatically. The station has thrown open its doors and the community has poured in. Of 30 new programs recently added to the station's schedule, 28 are locally produced. A country and western jukebox under the old regime, KPFT now supplements *Democracy Now!* with nationally syndicated programs like *Free Speech Radio News*, *Between the Lines*, and *Alternative Radio* with David Barsamian. Members of the Houston Independent Media Center are producing a Monday evening newscast that may morph into a daily program.

KPFT's \$390,000 spring fundraising drive netted \$100,000 more than any fund drive in the station's history. Bradley is cautiously optimistic that the 50,000-watt station can stay afloat in the heart of Bush country and provide the diverse, challenging programming that has been Pacifica's hallmark for 53 years. "Radio engages you," he says. "It forces you to use your imagination."



JOEL EDWARDS

"NO MORE MEDIA MANIPULATION"

HISTORIC STATEMENT BY VENEZUELA MEDIA WORKERS

Editors' Note: The trade union at Venezuela's largest newspaper, El Nacional, released a historic statement (a portion of which appears below) through its Executive Council, to serve as a warning to media owners that "we will no longer allow ourselves to be used" in the ways that occurred during the attempted coup d'état last April in Venezuela. To our knowledge, this is the first time anywhere in the capitalist world that media workers have risen up so decisively against the simulators of the mass media. The union can be contacted at sitranac@el-nacional.com.

El Nacional newspaper company has censored this communiqué and its workers have taken it upon themselves to let people know where the union stands.

Society is currently facing a crisis based on hatred and manipulation, imposed on us at will by leaders and organizations, a situation, which little by little, has led us to confrontations and intolerance on all levels and which could end in even greater ills.

As representatives of the workers of the country's most important print media, our trade union feels a deep responsibility vis-à-vis all the recent events and we think it important to announce that we will no longer allow ourselves to be used as a political flag or as an instrument of confrontation.

We want to make it clear that we do not agree nor will we agree with aggressive political marches, work stoppages and strikes for political purposes.

We do not approve of distorted and intolerant news slants and are not prepared to accept misnomered leaders and organizations that allegedly represent, guide and manipulate us with their stoppages and strikes when on repeated occasions they have denied workers the legitimate right to strike for labor benefits and failed to react to dismissals of workers exercising the right to free union activity and collective bargaining discussions to improve labor conditions.

Print and broadcast workers: we raise our voice as a right to be heard and to let people know what we really feel. We are responsible for what happens like every other Venezuelan. We must take a stand. We are the real majority whose support those so-called leaders falsely claim. They have brought us to this confrontation. The real majority in the country just wants peace, no work stoppages, no war and no coups d'état.

That is the real majority and we media workers play an important role in channeling this sincere and optimistic message.

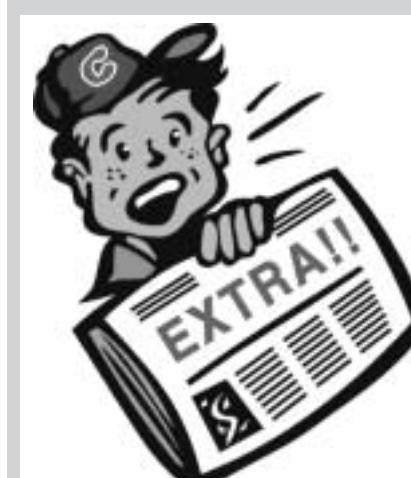
No more manipulations and confrontation.

We will not allow ourselves to be manipulated again.

We will not allow ourselves to be used as an image of lies to propagate disinformation.

No more.

Commitment and responsibility must start now and we must all participate in peaceful and sincere change.



VICTORIES WE TAKE FOR GRANTED

Faced every day with war, poverty, discrimination, suffering and exploitation, it is understandable that some throw up their hands and say, "Nothing ever changes."

But such fatalism does a disservice to those who have been fighting for social justice since before this country was born.

Progressive change seldom comes by chance, and without the concerted efforts of these dedicated individuals throughout our history, this nation and this world would be far crueler places with fewer freedoms for most of their inhabitants.

It is easy to forget sometimes, in the midst of our own struggles, the way that has already been carved by our predecessors, who helped claim rights that are too often taken for granted.

There are no uncomplicated victories. Many have fought for what were then (or now) considered narrow, even selfish, interests: for example, the early labor movement was notoriously exclusionary of women, immigrants and racial minorities. But it still changed the way people work, and helped make a more equitable world. It is unrealistic to expect perfect victories. Sometimes it is enough just to make things better.

In that spirit, here are 11 achievements of popular democratic movements, and 11 reasons to keep fighting.

DEBT RELIEF

After the American Revolutionary War, farmers across the new nation were left destitute by the shortage of hard currency. IOUs issued by Congress during the war were now in the hands of wealthy elites. States repaid these IOUs by levying draconian taxes on farmers and laborers, concentrating wealth even further. Debtors faced harsh sanctions, including prison. Farmers repudiated this immense transfer of wealth and the means of its enforcement. They argued that it undermined the independence won in the war, and began to take direct action to stop it. In Pennsylvania, roads were blocked to disrupt foreclosure auctions. In Massachusetts, Daniel Shays led a debtors' rebellion, and while local militia defeated his band, the debt relief they demanded was implemented the following year, firmly establishing the rights of debtors in the new republic.



Evictions in the Bronx in 1932 sparked at least two rent control riots. Various pro-tenant groups emerged from these riots, including African-American, labor, liberal and Communist pro- tenant groups.

RENT CONTROLS

Evictions in the Bronx in 1932 sparked at least two rent control riots.

Various pro-tenant groups emerged from these riots, including African-American, labor, liberal and Communist pro- tenant groups.

In 1942, when the federal government refused to include rents in wartime price controls, these groups protested and won. Rent control laws were enacted in 1943.

The Republican Congress of 1947 weakened rent controls, but a combination of rent strikes and competition between liberal and leftist political parties got the city and state to sustain them.

Rent regulations have survived two major blows since that time. Governor Nelson Rockefeller deregulated vacant apartments to great disaster in the early 1970s. Two decades later, Governor George Pataki has undermined rent regulations through vacancy increases, lax enforcement and a simpler eviction process. The laws come up for renewal next year.

LABOR

Hate your job? Until the 1880s, working usually meant 12-16 hour days, child labor, unpaid overtime, a 7-day week, and dangerous, even lethal, conditions. In 1882, New Yorkers held the nation's first labor day parade, calling for "8 hours for work, 8 hours for rest, 8 hours for recreation." Workers would spend another 50 years fighting a piecemeal battle before the 5-day, 40-hour week became commonplace. Subsequent struggles brought the minimum wage, the end of child labor, overtime pay, sick leave, collective bargaining rights and the paid vacation.



FOOD SAFETY/PRODUCT SAFETY

Industrialization in the late 19th century brought about many unsafe practices and products, especially in food processing. Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, published in 1906, highlighted the filthy conditions of Chicago's meat packing plants and caused national uproar. This culminated in the passage of the Food and Drug Act of 1906 and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906. Throughout the 20th century, food and product safety legislation continued, including the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act of 1938. In 1965, Ralph Nader published *Unsafe at Any Speed*, an attack on the dangerous automobiles. In 1971, Nader founded Public Citizen, which continues to expose unsafe products.

THE ADA/DISABILITIES MOVEMENT

In 1932, the U.S. elected Franklin Delano Roosevelt and it was under his administration that the movement for the disabled was born. When the Works Progress Administration (WPA) denied 300 disabled individuals employment in 1935, the League for the Physically Handicapped was created. They held protests in Washington and a sit-in at the WPA headquarters. They were victorious, generating 1,000 new jobs. Fifty-five years later, after several pieces of legislation, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 was signed into law. The act prohibits employment discrimination and discrimination in access to public buildings, as well as to hotels, bars, restaurants and other establishments based on disability.



THE SECOND AMERICAN REVOLUTION

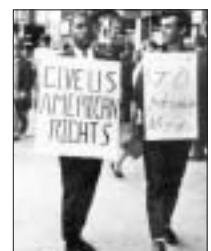
The passage of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments abolishing slavery, guaranteeing equal protection and extending the franchise to black men are sometimes referred to collectively as the Second American Revolution. Rightly so; the post-war amendments inaugurated changes in government and society as sweeping as those of 1776.

FIRST WAVE FEMINISM

The organized feminist movement in America began in 1848 with a conference at Seneca Falls, New York. Conferees laid the foundation for securing important, if forgotten, legislative victories for women. Property rights and legal status were lost by women entering into marriage throughout the first half of the century but leaders like Lucy Stone rejected the idea that marriage ended a woman's independent existence. Stone famously refused to take her husband's last name. The veterans of Seneca Falls fought for the 1848 passage of the Married Women's Property Act in New York State, giving limited property rights to women. Later acts in other states used New York as a model. By 1900, women had successfully obtained some measure of property rights and legal recognition in every state in the union.

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

The entirety of the Civil Rights movement is difficult to condense. Briefly, the arguable beginnings of civil rights victories came in 1948, when President Truman desegregated national troops. Six years later, in 1954, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) brought *Brown vs. Board of Education* to the Supreme Court, which struck down "separate but equal" public schooling. As a result of the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955, sit-ins, freedom rides, voter drives and nonviolent demonstrations of such groups as Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were passed.



END OF THE DRAFT

The number of draftees inducted during the Vietnam War peaked in 1967 at 382,010 young men. In April of that year, resistance to the war escalated at a peace rally in New York's Central Park, where 175 men burned their draft cards. The following autumn, the anti-war movement organized mass draft card turn-ins. The largest occurred on October 3, 1967, with more than 1,500 men returning their cards. Though such tactics didn't jeopardize the U.S. military establishment, they did help bring about the 26th Amendment, which lowered the voting age from 21 to 18. Life certainly became more difficult for the military. In 1971, Colonel Robert Heinl wrote, "The morale, discipline and battle-worthiness of the U.S. Armed forces are ... lower and worse than at any time in this century and possibly in the history of the U.S." Two years later, the government abandoned compulsory military service and hasn't reinstated it since.

GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT

In the struggle for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality, the campaign to change how American society views gay individuals and gay culture as a whole has been as important as any legal or legislative effort. The Stonewall riots of 1969 galvanized the American gay community, and introduced the struggle to many Americans. A month after the riots, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was formed, becoming arguably the first group to organize its agenda around securing the rights of the queer community. The GLF fought for an end to police harassment, repeal of sodomy laws and workplace protection, among other goals, winning a number of victories on the state level. The movement mushroomed from there; today, there are dozens of national groups and thousands of local and college queer collectives.

BIRTH CONTROL/AIDS PREVENTION

The availability of condoms at colleges, clubs, gas stations and anywhere else one might wish to look is now taken for granted. But prior to the hard work of AIDS activists such as ACT UP and Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC), condoms were harder to find and often carried a social stigma. While condoms have been produced for consumers since 1840, birth control was controversial and much maligned in the late 19th and early 20th century. The advent of the Pill in the early 1960s further decreased condom usage, replacing them in birth control at a time when that, and not disease prevention, was the most common reason for their usage. Unfortunately, it took the AIDS epidemic to turn condoms from a dirty word to a party favor, openly advertised and available everywhere.



MAKING CHANGE

Ithaca Leads Local Currency Movement

BY ANNE VENESKY

The consolidation of 12 European currencies in April into one supra-currency, the Euro, may have been a symbolic occasion, but it also represented something very real: the difficulty of maintaining regional autonomy in an era of corporate globalization.

Since 1991, the small upstate town of Ithaca, N.Y. has resisted the control of global banks and corporations over its local trade, monetary exchange and identity by issuing a local currency called Ithaca HOURS.

Local currencies are nothing new — the practice is centuries old. In the U.S., scrip currency sprang up during periods of weakness in the national economy, including the farm crises of the 1870s and 1880s and the bank failures of the 1930s.

The current rise in the use of local currency programs nationwide has been inspired largely by the Ithaca HOURS program, created by Paul Glover in 1991 to foster economic self-reliance, connect people and create a community identity during the recession of the early 1990s.

The HOUR is valued at an equivalent of an hour of work or roughly \$10. This time-based currency reflects ideals of a living wage, pay equity and the idea that "the real source of money's value is created by people — our time, skills and energy," according to the HOURS board of directors, who run the membership-based non-profit. The one-HOUR bill wryly presents the saying "Time is Money," subverting the materialist credo.

Eleven years after the first HOUR was used to buy a samosa at Ithaca's Farmers Market, some 1,500 individuals and businesses now use HOURS to buy and sell everything from food and books to massage therapy and movie tickets.

According to HOURS president Steve Burke, membership continues to expand 10 percent annually. More than 8,500 HOURS have been issued, generating several million dollars in trade since 1991.

And what's the greatest benefit of the local currency to Ithaca? It depends on who you ask. Some note how HOURS has helped renew the town's community spirit; others discuss the benefits of HOURS in terms of micro-economics; while small business owners may praise the no-interest loans.

Dave, an employee of Ithaca Books, which accepts HOURS, unwittingly demonstrates an HOURS-inspired spirit of mutual support. When asked to describe how the local currency system had affected the store's sales, he couldn't say. "We don't even try to calculate it ... we're just happy to support downtown," he said.

Gerard Dunphy, a yoga instructor, expressed the sense of community pride generated by Ithaca HOURS. "You're exchanging goods and services from the immediate area, not at some chain store," he said. "You're not paying some CEO living in Bermuda."

HOURS creator Glover described the strength of local currencies in comparative economic terms. "The national currency game [is] rigged to enrich the rich" by pumping money out of local areas and into large, urban money centers to finance corporate activity or debt interest, he told the *Indy*. Local currency, on the other hand, "is money with a boundary around it" which stimulates

regional trade many times over through an "infinite multiplier," enabling the community to supply its own needs.

Susan Witt of the E.F. Schumacher Society, an organization that studies democratically-based local economic structures, notes that "if a region produces for its own needs ... its currency 'hardens' or holds its value relative to other currencies. Imports are cheaper, trade is more equitable and even skewed in favor of the ... 'import-replacing' region."

Glover also describes the benefits of HOURS in terms of commodity backing. "The durability of money depends on commodity backing, and the capacity of real people to buy commodities," he recently told *Ithaca Community News*.

Unlike U.S. dollars, HOURS are physically backed by the real goods and services people buy. The dollar is "backed by a \$5.5 trillion national debt," says Glover.

International currencies have not been materially guaranteed since 1972 when global gold and silver standards were abandoned, resting value not on real production, but on financial speculation and debt.

As an independent and localized currency, the HOURS program has

also been able to issue local organizations and businesses more than 65 no-interest loans and grants in HOURS, ranging in value from \$50 to \$2,000. Ithaca's program has made the largest loan ever issued in a local currency, 3,000 HRS (\$30,000 in value) to Alternatives Federal Credit Union to help finance construction of a new

building.

As Ithaca's HOURS system has grown and evolved throughout the '90s, other HOURS systems have blossomed throughout the country and the world. There are at least 20 HOURS systems in the U.S. (66 worldwide in 1998), from Arizona's Tucson Traders, which have facilitated \$40,000 worth of transactions; to Bloomington, Indiana's BloomingHOURS; to Madison, Wisconsin's Madison Hours, which has attracted more than 400 participants since 1996.

The popularity of Ithaca HOURS has also made the town internationally famous and boosted local tourism. Community leaders from Korea and Senegal, and even French anti-globalization activists have visited Ithaca to seek advice on how to get an upper hand on the global economy.

HOURS have also become a collectible tourist item and conversation piece. "People have come [into Ithaca] and taken them away," attests Glover, "This is good, but the per capita supply of HOURS ... has been spread so thin, they're not activated as readily. Now, the main way the system can expand is through the loan program."

Inspired by the success of Ithaca HOURS, Annie Avery, of the small town of Oneonta, N.Y., created Oneonta HOURS in October 2001, and promotes them at her Green Earth grocery store. Whereas Ithacans feel their currency has been stigmatized as "hippie money," Oneonta's diverse political spectrum, which includes many conservatives, according to Avery, is open to the potential of HOURS. "Somebody is even willing to take HOURS as payment for rent," she said. "And my mother joined [as] a copy editor."

Artist Marianne Stowe gives art lessons for HOURS. "If Wall Street crashes, something like this will keep communities afloat," she affirmed.

Ithaca's Steve Burke similarly acknowledged perhaps the most important aspect of local money use — community solidarity. "Too often money keeps people separate," he said. "We want to bring people together."



When CNN becomes "America Strikes Back," where do you turn for news?

To *The Indy*. Delivered to your mailbox every month, the New York IMC's paper is investigating, instigating, and invigorating. For \$20/year, you can keep on top of the issues you care about with articles written by activists on the scene — like the Middle East, Colombia, Afghanistan, the environment, the criminalization of dissent, corporate globalization and the resistance to it, the IMF and Third World debt. Don't miss an issue — subscribe today!

Bill me

Check enclosed

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Phone _____

Subscription rate: \$20/year (10 issues). Angel rate: \$100/year. Make checks payable to the NYC IMC Print Team and send to: 34 East 29th St., 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10016.



BIG OIL BLOCKED

BY JUAN C. ORDÓÑEZ

Costa Rica may soon become the first country to ban oil development, the culmination of a grassroots campaign that recently torpedoed the plans of an American oil company. That campaign is the most far-reaching of several successful anti-oil efforts in the region, movements that illustrate the efficacy of broad-based environmental coalitions.

On May 8, Costa Rica's Ministry of the Environment and Energy blocked Harken Energy's oil exploration off the country's southeastern coast. The area is home to manatees, rare Tucuxi dolphins and endangered turtles.

The Texas-based company's defeat is largely due to Acción de Lucha Antipetrolera (ADELA), a coalition formed in 1999 in response to exploratory seismic blasts. ADELA includes over 60 municipal governments, environmental and indigenous groups, and fishing and tourism concerns. Backed by numerous international organizations, ADELA staged legal attacks, media blitzes and demonstrations.

Harken countered with threats and infiltration efforts, according to Emily Yozell, ADELA's International Liaison. Some activists have also accused the company of exerting pressure through its political connections, a charge denied by the U.S. Embassy in San José. Previously, George W. Bush was a Harken director and shareholder.

ADELA's "firm commitment" persevered, said Yozell, showing that "active participation [can] influence decision makers to take local communities' interests into account over the outside interests of a handful, and fight to determine [their] own development model."

Though oil is often seen as a development shortcut — Harken promised hundreds of jobs — industry critics call it an impediment. "The myth of oil prosperity runs

wide and deep," states a report by the Rainforest Action Network. "Petroleum-led strategies have delivered nation after nation into a spiral of debt and dependency."

Rejecting oil-led development, Costa Rican activists see biodiversity as a key asset. Eco-tourism, which coexists with conservation and traditional industries such as fishing, is growing.

Costa Rica's newly elected President, Abel Pacheco, apparently agrees. "[N]o one will ever mistake us for a petroleum enclave," he declared in his inaugural address, delivered just two days after the Ministry's ruling against Harken. Pacheco also vowed to make Costa Rica "an ecological leader" in the region. As an assembly member, Pacheco introduced pending legislation that, if enacted, will effectively ban oil development. No country is known to have done so before.

Pacheco's statements have reverberated in the region. On May 11, Guatemalan environmentalists urged President Alfonso Portillo to emulate his Costa Rican counterpart and reject oil development.

The call came amid a fight to stop oil exploration in Lake Izabal, which is bordered by wildlife reserves. Citing the lack of local consultation, a broad-based coalition, much like ADELA, initiated legal action and protests against an oil concession covering more than half the country's largest lake. Municipal leaders even threatened to shut down the nearby ports of Puerto Barrios and Santo Tomás, Guatemala's only outlets to the Atlantic.

The shutdown was unnecessary; President Portillo cancelled the concession on May 24. The lake region celebrated in traditional fashion, setting off firecrackers. "[W]hen civil society organizes, it can achieve many things," observed a representative of the Q'eqchi, an indigenous group.

A Colombian indigenous group, the U'Wa, recent-



THIS PRISTINE COSTA RICAN SHORELINE
is now protected from oil exploration.

ly scored an improbable victory. Numbering only 5,000, the U'Wa fought for nine years to stop Occidental Petroleum's drilling in their traditional territory, the cloudforests of northeast Colombia. They vowed to commit mass suicide if it continued.

Their struggle leaped onto the international stage, reaching the 2000 Democratic National Convention. There, U'Wa supporters demonstrated against Occidental shareholder Al Gore. Though it prevailed in the Colombian court system, Occidental abandoned its drilling plans in early May. U'Wa supporters claim that the negative publicity was decisive.

The U'Wa victory came at a high cost. Three Americans assisting the U'Wa were murdered, reportedly by left-wing guerrillas. Subsequently, three U'Wa children died when Colombian police broke up a blockade intended to disrupt the drilling site.

Despite recent successes, the activists' work continues. The U'Wa still fight to reclaim all of their traditional lands and guard against the possibility of any other oil company taking Occidental's place. Guatemalan activists have targeted a second oil concession near Lake Izabal. For its part, ADELA says it must work to bring development to the Costa Rican communities that backed the anti-oil campaign.

INDIGENOUS VOICES HEARD AT U.N.

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. — The indigenous peoples of the world, whose voices had been silenced by "the darkness of intolerance and neglect," according to United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette, held the first United Nations forum on indigenous issues here from May 13 to May 24.

Nearly 1,000 representatives of indigenous peoples — the original inhabitants of a place, land, or region — attended the meetings of the forum.

The forum was established as a body by the U.N. Economic and Social Council in 2000. Worldwide, there are an estimated 300 to 500 million indigenous people.

The extraordinary diversity of indigenous peoples was evident at the forum. Some are city dwellers, others remain hunter-gatherers. Some are tiny minorities, while others form the majority in their country. But connecting them all is a sense of their distinct cultures and languages and the traditional environments in which they live.

Frechette called the forum "a milestone in the struggle of indigenous peoples to win recognition of their rights and identities."

"This moment has been a long time coming," she said. "In the 1920s, Native Americans approached the League of Nations, but were met with indifference. Early efforts within the U.N. system similarly achieved little result."

Indigenous peoples "share a terrible history of injustice," Frechette stressed. "They have been killed, tortured and enslaved. Their lands have been taken over by conquest and colonization, or decreed to be terra nullius and claimed for national development. Even today, their children too often grow up in poverty."

One of the chief issues that face indigenous peoples is land rights. Land rights are central to the question of the survival of indigenous peoples and their cultures, said Erica-Irene Daes, chairperson of the U.N. Working



MAKING MUSIC AT THE UNITED NATIONS.

Group on Indigenous Populations.

Since their relationship to their land is deeply spiritual, the severance of that link is often destructive to their identity, Daes explained, adding that some governments continue to deprive indigenous peoples of their traditional ancestral lands. Certain governments support the non-indigenous settlement of indigenous lands, relocation of indigenous populations, and

development, mining and logging of indigenous lands.

The Algonquins of Barriere Lake (Canada), for example, are living on a tiny 59-acre reserve. A 1991 agreement with the governments of Canada and Quebec had provided for an integrated resource management plan for the Algonquin territory, but in 2001 the governments withdrew their support.

Darwin Hill, a Haudenosaunee Indian, represented his tribal group at the forum. Half of the 100,000 Haudenosaunes live in the United States, half in Canada. Hill lives on a "postage stamp size" 7,500-acre reservation near Buffalo, N.Y. "The wildlife preserve next to us is bigger," he said.

"We have a whole range of problems," Hill declared, "poverty, disease, alcoholism. We have difficulty securing a good education. History is a major issue. In our experience, history is 'his story,' not our story, not my story."

The physical health of indigenous people was also addressed during the U.N. forum. The "acute health needs" of indigenous peoples were delineated by Miliani Trask of the United States. Trask said the underlying causes of their poor health included colonization, homelessness, bad housing, poverty, lack of reproductive rights, domestic violence and addiction.

The forum's closing statement recommended that the U.N. establish a secretariat for the forum in New York, that the forum would be funded through the U.N. regular budget, and that the second session of the forum be held in 2003, so that "indigenous peoples are not again left with empty words."

EAST TIMOR: WORLD'S NEWEST NATION

BY JENNIFER FERMINO

For years, the U.S. government couldn't see the atrocities committed by its ally Indonesia — dollar bills blinded its eyes. Indonesia was a dream come true in the Southeast Asian market — 180 million people with a median age 18 and a government receptive to American interests. The U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia, Stapleton Roy, summed it up in 1999: "Indonesia matters, East Timor doesn't."

But to the three-quarters of a million people who suffered during the genocidal 24-year Indonesian occupation, East Timor did matter. It also mattered to activists who refused to give up. Together, they succeeded in making East Timor the 21st century's newest nation on May 20, 2002.

"When you consider how relatively unimportant East Timor is on the world stage, and how very important Indonesia is, I'm still amazed we helped the East Timorese do what they did," said John Miller, Media and Outreach Coordinator of the East Timor Action Network (ETAN), an advocacy group who has worked for East Timorese independence since 1991. "East Timor was considered as lost a cause as any when we started, even by sympathetic people."

Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975 with the support of former President Gerald Ford. Indonesia's scorched earth policy killed one-third of the population almost immediately. Ninety percent of the weapons used in the invasion came from the United States. Massacres, forced starvation, murder, mass rapes, and compulsory sterilization have all been documented.

Throughout the years, the United States continued to support Indonesia with millions of dollars in aid and military assistance. In 1991, foreign journalists witnessed the Indonesian army open fire on civilians at a pro-independence memorial service. Two hundred and seventy people were killed. Photos and videos of the Santa Cruz massacre showed the plight of the East Timorese to the world.

"This was an opportunity to do something while we had the world's attention [with the Santa Cruz massacre]," said Miller.

In New York, a group of activists gathered to keep East Timor's struggles in the minds of U.S. lawmakers and citizens. Americans were organizing in other cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles. Eventually, they joined forces to become the national group ETAN.

They held protests, wrote legislators, staged aggressive letter-writing campaigns, sponsored speakers and events to highlight the cause and established an office in Washington, D.C. to be closer to Congress.

ETAN's hard work paid off with their first major victory in the spring of 1992 — a halt to the training of Indonesian soldiers at the International Military Education and Training School, similar to the School of Americas. ETAN then secured a ban on jet fighters sold to Indonesia. Restrictions on small arms followed.

More and more members of Congress began to speak out about East Timor. Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) ran his successful 1992 campaign highlighting the problems in East Timor. Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) was also an early outspoken advocate for East Timor.

Bowing to international pressure, Indonesia agreed to hold a U.N.-sponsored plebiscite in East Timor in 1999. Months of terror and coercion did not stop 78 percent of the East Timorese voting for independence.

Instead of celebrating, the East Timorese faced retaliation from the Indonesian army. U.N. election monitors and foreign journalists were forced out of the country. The Indonesians had learned from the Santa Cruz massacre how disastrous witnesses could be.

Some 2,000 East Timorese were murdered. Seventy percent of the country's infrastructure was destroyed, including almost every school. Hundreds of women were raped and



SIMBA RUSSEAU

EAST TIMOR GAINED its independence on May 20. Powerful energy companies covet its natural resources.

business deals to the likes of energy giants like Phillips Petroleum. In April, Secretary of State Colin Powell warned the incoming Timorese government not to prosecute any U.S. officials for crimes against humanity under the procedures of the newly-established International Criminal Court.

May 20, the official day of independence, was celebrated in East Timor with parades, speeches, fireworks and all-night parties. In the United States, the House of Representatives passed a near-unanimous resolution supporting the East Timorese nation.

"After decades of tremendous suffering under military occupation, we need to give generously to East Timor to ensure that children are guaranteed a quality education, adequate health care and shelter, and that other needs for a decent standard of living are met," said Rep. Patrick Kennedy (D-RI).

country to strike indefinitely at midnight that night, in response to threats of privatization and police brutality. The likelihood of a general strike led to a mass public withdrawal of funds from banks.

In a final attempt to avoid the strike and further destabilization, the Senate revoked Law 1,615. The CDP considered the popular mobilization victorious and called the general strike off.

It was the seventh time that popular mobilizations held back the sale of a state-owned company.

Paraguay's social upheaval has been aggravated by its deepening economic crisis, which has reached unprecedented levels amidst pressure from the United States and the IMF to implement privatization. It has seen the privatization of its national airline, Lapsa; the steel company, Acepar; the spirit manufacturer, Apal; and the state fleet of cargo vessels, Flomerpasa.

Unemployment in Paraguay is at 34 percent, and 25 percent of the rural population lives in extreme poverty. As a result of the Argentine economic crisis, the country has suffered an 80 percent reduction in trade activity, with exports cut in half. Furthermore, the high exchange rate of the Paraguayan guarani to the U.S. dollar, and the increase in the price of oil have also negatively impacted the local economy.

Several leftist organizations in Paraguay believe that the current crisis is part of the struggle of the nation's elite to regain control after the social turbulence that followed the assassination of the vice president, Luis María Argaña, in 1999.

PARAGUAY HANGS UP ON IMF

PROTESTERS BLOCK TELEPHONE PRIVATIZATION

BY TATIANA REIS

After three weeks of demonstrations throughout the country, the Paraguayan government announced on June 4 that the privatization of the state-owned telephone company, Copaco, would be postponed indefinitely. President Luis González Macchi assured the Paraguayan people that the government would not proceed with the sale of Copaco to foreign interests.

The dramatic decision to call off the sale, which was valued at \$400 million, far beneath the estimated value of \$600 million, came in the midst of a wave of popular upheaval in Paraguay, particularly amongst the peasants.

Five thousand peasants gathered in Coronel Oviedo to march 120 kilometers (75 miles) to the capital, Asunción. They were to join other demonstrators in a vigil in front of the Congress, while awaiting the outcome of the Senate session concerning Law 1,615, which regulates and allows the privatization process of state-owned companies.

Three hundred government-ordered troops shot and tear gassed demonstrators who occupied and blocked main highways en route to Asunción with tear gas and



gunshots. One peasant was killed with a shot to the head. The march continued until the police force halted protesters in Caacupé, 48 kilometers (30 miles) from Asunción.

The political crisis reached a peak the next day, June 5, when the Congreso Democrático del Pueblo (CDP) — a united front comprised of worker's unions and social movements — summoned the workers from all over the

GLOBAL

G8 SUMMIT STIFFS AFRICA AND PROTESTERS

Secluding themselves in the remote Canadian mountain resort of Kananaskis, the leaders of the world's leading economies managed to keep protesters at arm's length as they came together to for a two-day Group of Eight summit to deliberate the global economy and a plan to alleviate poverty in Africa.

Security was extraordinarily tight. The choice of Kananaskis, 80 miles from the nearest city, successfully denied protesters access to the summit. The Canadian military ringed the resort with approximately 5,000 troops, tanks and a 150-mile aerial "exclusion zone."

Protesters responded by holding demonstrations in the capital, Ottawa, and other Canadian cities before and during the June 26 and 27 meeting. Even so, this year's protests were muted in contrast to last year's meeting in Genoa, when 150,000 protesters descended on the summit.

Activists and aid groups slammed this year's G-8 decision to pledge 580 million dollars to Africa. The pledge amounts to five percent of the 10 billion-dollar plan proposed by U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan to treat and prevent AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

"There's nothing new here," said Njoki Njoroge Njehu, director of "50 Years is Enough," a debt-relief organization. "Africa's future should no less or no more be decided in the Canadians Rockies than Canada's future should be decided in the central highlands of Kenya where I was born and raised," she added.

PERUVIAN SECURITY CHIEF RESIGNS

Fernando Rospigliosi, Peru's Interior Minister, quit the government following a week of protests over the auction of two state-owned electricity companies, Egasa and Egesur. Rospigliosi opposed the state of emergency decree issued in Arequipa, Peru's second largest city, and the dispatch of 1,700 troops to the city to suppress demonstrators.

More than 100 demonstrators were injured and one was killed during protests. In Lima, public transport workers waged a two-day strike to protest government reprisals. Tractebel, the Belgian company that won the bid for the utilities, responded by halting the sale.

The protests erupted out of a fear of layoffs and in protest of President Alejandro Toledo's broken campaign promise that he would not privatize state-owned companies. Less than a year into his presidency, Toledo's approval ratings have plunged to 20 percent.

VIOLENT REPRESSION IN ARGENTINA

Dario Santillan, 21, and Maximiliano Costeki were killed and 90 more people injured June 26 when 2,000 riot police attacked jobless protesters and neighborhood groups intent on blockading a key bridge outside the capitol city of Buenos Aires to demand food and jobs.

The crackdown marks the first time police have directly attacked protesters since nation's economy imploded in December. Spontaneous demonstrations of up to 25,000 people erupted throughout the country in the wake of the killings.

On the following day, protesters shut down every major highway in the country.

Since November, half of all Argentines have slipped below the poverty line and public anger has been roused by a freeze on bank deposits. Argentina's economy declined 16 percent in the first quarter of 2002, after the sudden collapse of the government's neo-liberal economic policies.

Iraq: 'Smart Sanctions' Still Kill

BY A.K. GUPTA

From *Star Wars* to *Stuart Little*, this is the summer of sequels. But for many, the most anticipated sequel of all hasn't even begun shooting — the invasion of Iraq. Bush and Co. are itching to finish off Saddam Hussein, seeing the Sept. 11 attacks as the perfect pretext to launch Desert Storm II. But another long-playing Mideast show, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, has cooled the White House's war fever, at least for this year.

Feeling rebuffed by Arab audiences who have panned previews of an all-out U.S. invasion, Bush has had to console himself with a Tom Clancy-esque plot to bring down Hussein's house.

According to the *Washington Post*, Bush signed an intelligence order earlier this year directing the CIA to topple Hussein, "including authority to use lethal force." Apparently, this decision presented a dilemma. Not wanting to legitimize attempts on his own head by commanding a decades-old U.S. policy against assassinating world leaders, Bush instead only authorized CIA and Special Forces teams "to kill Hussein if they were acting in self-defense."

So U.S. policy toward Iraq is apparently now based on hit squads knocking on Hussein's palace doors and asking if he can come out and fight so they can kill him in "self-defense."

Until that happens, the only show playing is the tragedy of sanctions. The *Washington Post* report came shortly after the U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1409 on May 14, imposing "smart sanctions" on Iraq.

Resolution 1409 lifts controls on civilian goods, but a "goods review list" has been retained that can be used to block "dual-use goods." This will likely do little to alleviate the situation of ordinary Iraqis. Foreign investment is still blocked, along with the export of any goods other than oil. And Iraq is not allowed to spend any revenue it legally produces from oil sales domestically.

The imposition of sanctions on August 6, 1990 was originally intended to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, which it had invaded days earlier. Since then, a slew of other conditions have been tacked on — ending Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs, a "regime change," ending mistreatment of all Iraqis or persecuted Kurds in the North and Shi'a in the South, accounting for an estimated 200 Kuwaitis still missing from the invasion, letting weapons inspectors back in, etc.

The international consensus has been crumbling after nearly 12 years of sanctions had reduced Iraqis to penury, taking a particularly heavy toll on children. A UNICEF study published in 1999 estimated that the mortality rate for children under five had more than doubled since 1990 from 56 to 131 deaths per 1,000. Some 32 percent of Iraqi children are chronically malnourished, and, according to



Sanctions against Iraq have caused extreme shortages of food and medical supplies, resulting in an estimated 1.5 million deaths.

one estimate, more than 1.5 million Iraqis have died because of the scarcity of medicine and food caused by the sanctions.

The change to smart sanctions is seen as a tacit admission that the previous measures were a failure. A *New York Times* report noted, "The resolution was intended to blunt any drive to end the sanctions altogether and to deflate criticism that the measures are hurting ordinary Iraqis more than their leader."

Opponents of smart sanctions call them the "same, old stupid sanctions." Voices in the Wilderness (VITW) says smart sanctions mean, "There will be no economic, educational and infrastructure recovery," though it may "make it easier for Iraq to import humanitarian goods."

Previously, any one of the 15 members of the U.N. Security Council could place an indefinite "hold" on goods Iraq wished to import. The justification was that this would prevent Iraq from acquiring dual-use goods that could be used in the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction — biological, chemical or nuclear. At one point, more than \$5 billion worth of goods were held up, almost all by the U.S. and U.K. This included such basic items as ambulances, baking soda, forklifts, chemicals for purifying water, irrigation pipes and even pencils.

Because it can only legally import goods under the "oil-for-food" program established in 1996, Iraq is unable to meet the needs of its 22 million people. In theory, the program allows for unlimited oil exports. But because of Iraq's decaying infrastructure, which has been further hobbled by the blocking of spare parts, it can produce at best 75 percent of its pre-sanctions output of 3.5 million barrels of oil a day.

Iraq never sees a penny of this money; it's controlled by the U.N. Of that, only 70 percent is allocated for goods. The rest goes toward administrative costs and reparations. So, according to VITW, while Iraq sold more than \$37 billion worth of oil from 1997 through 2000, "only \$9 billion of goods actually arrived in Iraq." For the average Iraqi, this means less than 40 cents a day is allocated to meet all her humanitarian needs.

Despite all this, Iraq accepted Resolution 1409. According to *Middle East International*, Baghdad's acceptance "was strongly indicative of its current strategy — to get back in the good graces of the international community while limiting its defiance of the U.S. Analysts said Iraqi approval was 'another clever move to leave no excuses for Washington to launch a war against it.'"

For the foreseeable future, stalemate appears to be the order of the day. There's no international consensus to lift sanctions, but neither is there one to invade Iraq. Bush, Cheney and Powell vow that "they'll be back" to finish the job of terminating Hussein's regime, but no one's lining up to buy tickets to this show.

AIDS continued from cover

Undoubtedly, it will take more than just community leadership to stem the AIDS tidal wave. Twenty-two million people have died in just 20 years, more than were claimed in Europe's Black Death. Thirty-six million are now infected, 70 percent living in Africa. The number of African children orphaned through AIDS, now totalling 13 million, exceeds the entire population of Pennsylvania.

With 4.7 million HIV-positive persons, South Africa harbors the highest number of cases. Life expectancy has fallen almost 20 years to a paltry 47. Yet when Pendry first arrived in 1997, AIDS was still a non-issue. "It was not talked about in the newspapers. It was nowhere," she recalls.

The culprits for this were, and continue to be, numerous recalcitrant African politicians, silent religious leaders, social taboo, and enduring gender and economic disparities. While some prominent figures — such as Bill Gates and Bono — have called for increased funding or more affordable drugs, the U.S. government and its large pharmaceutical lobby have done comparatively little.

But, the spirit of discussion in South Africa present upon Pendry's arrival — at the height of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission — offered an opportunity for dialogue. "People were able to testify about their life," remembers Pendry. "That is transformative."

Cynthia Mpongo, a 29-year-old South African, is pursuing her own community-level exposé. Incensed by the denial in her Cape Town township — where HIV runs rampant in the densely populated quarters of apartheid's legacy — she has waged a personal crusade to prove that, like herself, you can be HIV-infected and still live life.

"Now look at me," she challenges skeptics, "I'm positive. Can you see anything different?" Sparked by the Living Together Project, Mpongo is adamant about educating the public. "When they see the face of AIDS, they say, 'now I'll get tested.'"

In addition to dialogue, Mpongo spreads awareness by photographing the effects of AIDS — part of Living Together's emphasis on shattering stigma. "We are the community people. We are the people who are dying. We have the responsibility," she declares. "We can't sit back and relax."

"Not everything is resolvable through treatment," agrees Pendry. "No pill can eliminate violence against women, or poverty or stigma."

AIDS's resistance to quick fixes is boding true in the U.S. It took a massive activist response to clear up misconceptions of AIDS as a "gay cancer," and to incite changes in public policy and speedier drug approval.

Groups such as ACT UP took their slogan "Silence = Death" literally — shutting down the New York Stock Exchange in 1985 and marching non-stop well into the '90s.

As a result, awareness skyrocketed and infections fell — from 150,000 new cases per year during the 1980s to an estimated 40,000 new infections today — and treatment became available.

Yet the AIDS crusade eventually quieted. Membership in ACT UP waned as the disease became more liveable and less immediately threatening. The 2001 World AIDS Day theme beseeched — "I care ... Do you?"

Americans obviously need to keep caring: infection rates across the board have stopped falling and are rising in some communities. Blacks accounted for 46 percent of new infections in 2000, though they make up only 12 percent of the population; African-American and Hispanic women, making up 25 percent of the population, accounted for a startling 81 percent of all new cases in 1999.

"AIDS is a disease that strikes marginalized communities, whether in Africa or the U.S.," says Pendry.

Continuing misunderstanding and stigma are key culprits. In a survey published in this March's *American Journal of Public Health*, in 1999, 41 percent of participants believed they could get AIDS from using public toilets.

lets, compared to 34 percent in 1991. And 50 percent believed that they could get AIDS from being coughed on by a person with AIDS, compared to 46 percent in 1991.

"It is always easier to blame others for the spread of HIV," UNAIDS notes, "but progress against the epidemic is only possible when communities own the problem."

Campaigners in the south, like the early ACT UP activists, are owning up to AIDS. The South African Treatment Action Campaign recently won the right to import generic drugs to treat patients, defeating 40 drug manufacturers in a lawsuit thrown out of court in 2001. An agreement reached during international trade talks last November continues to reinforce this precedent to ease AIDS patent restrictions.

Along with drug victories, the broader societal climate is changing. South African President Thabo Mbeki finally reversed his anti-drug stance this April. Most of the South African papers feature recurring columns discussing AIDS.

"My church now has 15 minutes devoted to talking about AIDS every Sunday," says Mpongo, who mounted a photo exhibit at her place of worship last year.

In a similar spirit of confession, more than 100 religious leaders across the continent declared their *mea culpas* this June. "We have been reluctant to speak openly about HIV-AIDS," stated a declaration from the World Conference on Religion and Peace, "and have thus at times contributed to the silence and stigma that surround the disease."

The rising awareness is helping. According to the South African Health Ministry, infection rates appear to have stabilized as of this June. Yet the pan-African crisis is hardly over. In the 15 minutes it might have taken to read this article, another 63 people will have lost their lives.

While the pandemic is receiving growing attention in Washington, U.S. leaders continue to drag their funding feet. President Bush pledged with much fanfare this June an additional \$300 million. Yet his "gift" is more a lump of coal: it totals a mere 3 percent of what the U.N. estimates is necessary to fight AIDS annually, offers only 20 percent of what Britain is slating for the next five years, and would only be made available in 2004.

Pendry knows there is still much work to do. "[Stigma] is a prison. It prevents leadership. It separates people from their communities," she says.

For this coming World AIDS Day Dec. 1, she is organizing a Living Together Project at Robbin Island — where Nelson Mandela and many other apartheid resisters were once imprisoned — to drive that point home.

"It is possible for societies to transform," she says. Like people living with AIDS today, those "who were once served death sentences can be accepted back again to become national leaders."



U.N. PHOTO ARCHIVES

THE AIDS PANDEMIC claims new victims daily but the growing awareness and frank discussion of AIDS offers hope for the future.

here. We have spent trillions of dollars on overseas aid, but we have little to show for it."

O'Neill probably had an inkling of the positive publicity that would be garnered from a trip with Bono. O'Neill, with Bono, got to show that he has a heart, cooing at babies and acting shocked at the conditions. He also got to wear native garb and purple Bonoesque sunglasses.

O'Neill even attempted to prove his "hipness" by quoting some of Bono's famous lyrics. "For some 50 years, thoughtful, compassionate people have struggled to solve poverty here. As Bono, my friend and travelling companion, might say we 'still haven't found what we're looking for.'" One can just picture O'Neill's aides pawing through the lyrics of *The Joshua Tree* album, trying to find an appropriate quote for O'Neill to use.

After O'Neill returned from his travels, Bush announced an increase in aid to Africa; \$500 million to help the fight



NICK COOPER.COM

against AIDS, \$100 million for education. The \$500 million pledged, however, is only earmarked for mother-to-child transmission of AIDS, not for sex education or condom distribution.

Also, \$200 million of the proposed increase had already been approved by Congress; Bush added another \$300 million, underbidding leading Republicans like Sen. Jesse Helms who had been calling for an additional \$500 million in aid.

The Bush Administration may also increase total U.S. foreign aid. At a recent press conference, O'Neill indicated the administration is looking to increase the annual aid budget gradually from \$10 billion to \$15 billion by 2006, or 0.015 percent of the U.S.'s annual gross national product. Roughly \$1.4 billion is earmarked for Africa's 675 million people in fiscal year 2003. With Africa's debt repayments at \$14.5 billion per year, the aid does not leave much spare change. Maybe O'Neill, at least, got to keep those purple shades.

The Bono/O'Neill Show

BY EMILY REINHARDT

Republicans rarely miss a beat in procuring photo opportunities with aging rock stars. Nixon, famously, shook Elvis' hand in the Oval Office, and recently, George W. Bush recognized Ozzy Osbourne at the White House Correspondents Dinner.

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill has chosen his rock star: Bono. In May, Bono and O'Neill toured Africa, visiting Ghana, South Africa, Uganda and Ethiopia. Bono wanted to show O'Neill the conditions in Africa.

Economic aid to Africa has dropped during the last ten years. Worldwide aid to Sub-Saharan countries fell from \$17.2 billion in 1990 to \$12.3 billion in 1999, the World Bank reports. African countries are also massively in debt. According to Democracy, Accountability and Transparency in Africa (DATA), Sub-Saharan debt repayments are at \$14.5 billion, exceeding the amount of aid they receive.

O'Neill has been a vocal critic of economic aid to foreign nations. "Don't talk to me about compassion..." he was quoted as saying. "Human beings everywhere, without exception, have the ability to achieve the standard of living we have

Venezuela: Apocalypse When?

BY MARK PICKENS

It's been a tough year for Hugo Chavez, the populist president of Venezuela. In April, business elites and military factions engineered a coup that temporarily succeeded in removing him from power. His presidency was saved when several hundred thousand of Venezuela's poor took to the streets to protest. Now there are clear signs that another coup, more violent and decisive, could depose this popular leader anytime in the next few weeks.

Chavez's ejection would mean the demise of a strong critic of corporate globalization. He has opposed U.S. foreign policy while emerging as a leader of cooperation among developing nations.

Chavez's popularity at home lies with Venezuela's poor. A fiery orator, Chavez swept into the presidency in 1998 blasting the "rancid oligarchy" of Venezuela's business and political elite that have failed to turn vast oil wealth into prosperity. Venezuela is the world's fourth leading oil producer. Despite this, more than 80 percent of Venezuela's 24 million citizens live in poverty.

With a sky-high 76 percent of the population supporting him in 1998, Chavez went on to win seven elections and referendums during his four years in office, giving him the mandate to rewrite the constitution and issue reams of new laws. He has eliminated school fees, permitting thousands of children to attend classes for the first time, and raised the minimum wage by 20 percent. Chavez has also announced that land reform must start, a crucial policy in this nation where one percent of the population owns 60 percent of the land.

Active at home with his "Bolivarian revolution," Chavez has also been busy on the international front. "We do not want a unipolar or bipolar world," said Chavez in an interview earlier this year. "The 20th century was bipolar, and look what we have now. A unipolar world would be worse."

Chavez has run afoul of the United States, particularly when he's mixed oil and politics. Chavez helped engineer a quadruple rise in oil prices in 2000 by encouraging other oil-producing nations to cut production, much to the dismay of oil-hungry Western nations. Chavez has also made a mutual aid agreement with Cuba that trades cheap oil for Cuban doctors and teachers, and a deal with eleven Caribbean nations extending them preferential oil prices and long-term loans to finance national development. For some commentators, Chavez's oil policies mark a novel attempt to manage globalization for the benefit of poorer countries.

Since Sept. 11, Chavez has upped his activity. Chavez has called upon the U.S. to "stop fighting terror with terror" in Afghanistan. In December he criticized the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA), which he said promised to further impoverish Latin America. "Is the FTAA the way? No," he said. Chavez is the only South American leader to criticize openly the trade pact being pushed by the Bush administration.

But tweaking the tail of the global tiger pales in comparison to Chavez's battles with the Venezuelan elite. In the past seven months, Chavez has cast aside his global sermonizing to wage war at home with a vital and aggressive alliance of business owners, clergy, disgruntled military officers and the nation's largest labor union. In an ironic twist, the populist president of Venezuela's most powerful foe may be the national trade union, CTV, which is dominated by skilled, well-paid oil workers.

Their dissent was sparked by Chavez's attempt to regain control of the national oil company, Petroleos de Venezuela, and double the royalties foreign oil companies must pay for the right to extract Venezuelan oil. These moves, hitting close to the levers of power in Venezuela's oil-dominated economy, provided the glue to unite the diverse anti-Chavez factions. Their opposition culminated



HUGO CHAVEZ'S CRITICS are outraged by his friendship with Fidel Castro. Chavez won 62 percent of the vote in Venezuela's last election.

in the April 12 coup, which very nearly succeeded.

Chavez's opponents have not let up, though. Last month CTV union head Carlos Ortega publicly demanded that Chavez quit, declaring, "Resign, Mr. President. All of Venezuela will thank you." Chavez has countered by offering to hold a referendum on whether he should remain in power. "I'm not resigning and they are not going to topple me," Chavez said in a national radio address.

It may be the 80,000-man military that holds the key to what happens in the weeks ahead. The *Christian Science Monitor* reports that a second coup attempt, possibly much bloodier than the first in April, is likely between now and July 5. July 5 is when the annual round of military promotions is announced. Chavez may remove many dissident officers from their posts. The prospect is polarizing the military.

Media outlets owned by the nation's wealthy have helped propagate a climate of uncertainty by airing a video of ten masked men claiming to be military officers condemning the government. In addition to the video aired on television, other anonymous officers have warned the media that a coup is likely, promising a "river of blood" if there were resistance by Chavez supporters.

"They did the same to Salvador Allende," Chavez said, referring to the reforming, democratically elected president of Chile murdered in 1973 in a U.S.-backed coup.

"They wage war against him [Chavez] through the news media." Greg Palast, a BBC investigative reporter familiar with conditions in Venezuela, said in an interview with the *Independent*. "There's a very good chance they're going to kill him. It's the obvious next move." Chavez promised a revolution when he was elected, but what the Venezuelans may get is a counter-revolution.

RALLYING AGAINST NUKEs Peace Activists Seek to Revive Slumbering Movement

BY DONALD PANETH

Six hundred people marked the 20th anniversary of the largest anti-nuclear and mass protest in American history with a June 12 rally at the Ethical Culture Society on the Upper West Side. Urgent, new questions about nuclear weapons and their possible use were evoked.

The rally, sponsored by Peace Action of New York State, demanded "No new nuclear weapons. No new nuclear targets. No new pretexts for nuclear war."

At the rally, along with its anti-nuclear position, substantive and procedural questions emerged.

Can an anti-nuclear arms movement be brought together with the anti-corporate globalization movement for integrated, coordinated non-violent action?

Does the United States actually intend to implement its announced preemptive, first strike nuclear policy, or is it just trying to scare everybody?

Are President George W. Bush and his cohorts readying the use of tactical nuclear weapons on the battlefield?

"Today, there are some 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world's arsenals, nearly as many as when the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was agreed to in 1968." Bhaskar Menon writes in *Disarmament: A Basic Guide*, "Since the end of the Cold War, the strategic role of nuclear weapons has been reaffirmed both by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Russian Federation. They do not rule out the first use of nuclear weapons."

Observers at the rally noted that most of those in the audience were middle-aged or elderly.

Will young people respond to the call for a revived anti-nuclear weapons movement?

A number of anti-nuclear arms movement veterans addressed the rally. These included Jonathan Schell, author; Randall Forsberg, Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies; Cora Weiss, Hague Appeal for Peace; Leslie Cagan, Pacifica Radio National Board; and



OSSIE DAVIS SPEAKS at a June 12 rally that marked the 20th anniversary of the largest protest in U.S. history.

Grace Paley, writer.

As long-time activists, they recalled the significant peace events of 20 years ago — June 1982 — the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on disarmament; the one-million-person march in Central Park against nuclear arms; the arrest of more than 1,600 demonstrators who blocked the entrances to the U.N. missions of those countries possessing nuclear weapons.

A fervent grassroots nuclear freeze movement against building more nuclear arms followed. President Ronald Reagan's "Star Wars" missile defense proposals, however, took the steam out of the movement.

On June 13, the day after the rally, the U.S. formally withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 which had restricted the development of defensive missile systems. On June 14, Russia ended its participation in the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START II) of 1993 relating to missiles with multiple warheads.

"We're back to a situation which is extraordinarily similar to the one we faced in 1982," Forsberg said. "Now we need a 10-million-person movement."

For more information, contact Ken Estey, Peace Action New York State Director, 475 Riverside Drive, New York N.Y. 10115-0122, (212) 870-2304.

COLOMBIAN CONTRAS

U.S. PROPAGANDISTS PREPARE AMERICA FOR NEW GENERATION OF "FREEDOM FIGHTERS"

BY GARRY M. LEECH

Otto Reich, assistant secretary of state for the Western Hemisphere, wasted little time before traveling to Bogotá, Colombia, to congratulate President-elect Alvaro Uribe.

Reich followed the example set by the U.S. ambassador to Colombia, Anne Patterson, who offended protocol by visiting Uribe's campaign headquarters on election night to congratulate him before his victory had been officially declared.

Uribe's victory presents the Bush administration with a perfect opportunity to increase U.S. involvement in Colombia's civil war, but in order to do so, Reich, a former Reagan administration propagandist, will likely have to clean up the image of the Colombian military and its paramilitary allies.

Consequently, right-wing death squads may soon be presented to the U.S. public as "freedom fighters," Colombia's version of the Nicaraguan Contras.

From 1983 to 1986, Reich was chief of the State Department's Office of Public Diplomacy (OPD), which served as the propaganda office for the Reagan White House. Reich was responsible for spreading fear in the U.S. public of Nicaragua's Sandinista government and promoting the U.S.-backed Contras, a counter-revolutionary group consisting primarily of thugs and soldiers loyal to deposed dictator Anastasio Somoza.

Following a decision in 1985 by the U.S. Congress to cut off funding for the Contras, Reagan's intervention became a covert operation. Colonel Oliver North began illegally selling weapons to Iran and using a portion of the proceeds covertly and illegally to fund the Contra forces.

Reich worked closely with North and the National Security Council to manage White House policy toward Nicaragua until the Iran-Contra scandal broke. A comptroller general's report stated that Reich's office had "engaged in prohibited, covert propaganda activities." OPD was shut down in 1987.

In March 2001, despite Reich's illegal activities during the Reagan years, President George W. Bush made him the State Department's chief diplomat in Latin America. Reich's recent visit to Bogotá — his second in the past three months — suggests that the Bush White House intends to establish close ties with the incoming Uribe administration as it develops an increasingly aggressive attitude toward Colombia's Marxist guerrillas.

With Reich and his fellow Contra-supporting cohorts, Elliot Abrams and John Negroponte (also members of the Bush administration's policy-making team), there exists the real possibility that a failure to achieve its goals overtly under the guise of the war on drugs and terrorism in Colombia will lead the Bush White House to return to covert operations.

If Reich's past activities at the OPD are any indication, the U.S. public can expect to be deceived about Washington's escalating role in Colombia's conflict, especially with regard to U.S. links to the Colombian military and its paramilitary allies.

Following Bush's nomination of Reich last year, Jeff Cohen of the media watchdog organization Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) addressed Reich's record.

"Take the scary news that Soviet MiG fighter jets were arriving in Nicaragua," Cohen recalled. "With journalists citing unnamed 'intelligence sources,' the well-timed story surged through U.S. media on the night of Ronald

Reagan's re-election. At NBC, Andrea Mitchell broke into election coverage with the story. The furor spurred a Democratic senator to discuss a possible air strike against Nicaragua. But the story turned out to be a hoax. Several journalists later acknowledged they'd been handed the story by Reich's office."

Cohen also pointed out that "Reich's office promoted the fable that Nicaragua had acquired chemical weapons from the Soviets."

And when questions regarding Washington's role in last month's failed coup in Venezuela are taken into account, it appears that Reich may already be up to his old tricks again.



THE U.S. SUPPLIES more than \$1 billion per year in military aid to Colombia.

The close ties being developed between Uribe and the Bush White House were further evidenced less than two weeks after Reich's visit to Bogotá when the Colombian president-elect traveled to Washington. Uribe met with President Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice and requested greater U.S. involvement in Colombia under the guise of the war on terrorism.

With the president-elect's militaristic campaign rhetoric and his past ties to civilian self-defense groups in Antioquia, the stage is set for Reich and company to relive their glory years by providing overt support to the Colombian military and covert aid to right-wing paramilitary death squads.

The Bush administration's war on terrorism and Reich's re-energized propaganda machine may soon have unsuspecting Americans rooting for right-wing paramilitary death squads that will undoubtedly be portrayed as "freedom-fighting" Colombian Contras.

Garry M. Leech is editor of the online journal Colombia Report. He is also author of the book, Killing Peace: Colombia's Conflict and the Failure of U.S. Intervention, which is available online at www.colombiareport.org



Freedom Cinema presents Premiere Screenings of international IMC films

Every other Thursday, 8 p.m. \$5 donation.

Walker Stage, 56 Walker Street, 2 blocks so. of Canal between Church & B'way. For info:
imc-nyc-video@lists.indymedia.org.

Prisons

continued from pg. 7

specifically to oppose the prison, welcomed the broader perspective that Kaplan offered.

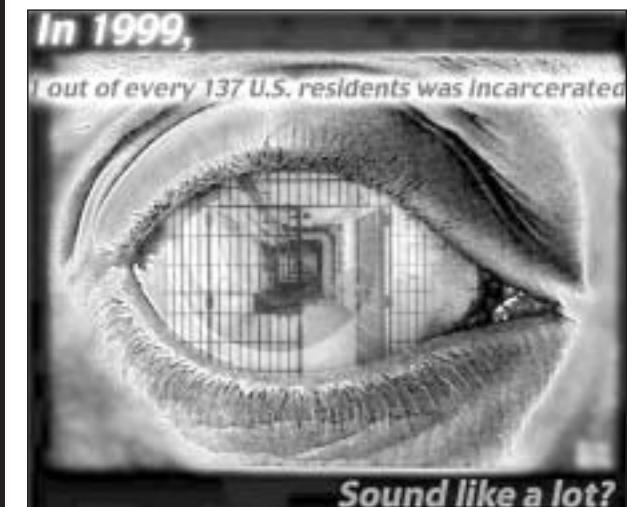
"I'm a teacher, so I know there's not a lot of money for schools. I had been against the prison coming here, and then when I found out it wasn't even needed, I knew I had to get involved."

O'Hara first learned about the state's falling juvenile crime rates from the information packets that PMP provided. But during a trip to Albany to meet with their local representatives and Assembly Democrats, she and other Bainbridge residents heard firsthand accounts of the impacts of prisons on downstate communities and the huge fiscal burdens they place on state coffers. Kaplan organized this lobbying day with the help of the New York State Correctional Association, an independent prison watchdog group based in New York City.

The lobbyists, calling themselves the Rural-Urban Coalition for Youth and Community Development, consisted of formerly incarcerated youth from New York City, Legal Aid attorneys, alternative-to-incarceration program staffers, researchers and upstate residents.

"They had never seen a coalition of upstate and downstate interests on criminal justice," said Kaplan. "Rural and urban community members coming together on a prison issue in New York State? That's unbelievable," they said. That has the potential to move politics." The lobbying day was also an opportunity for the upstate and downstate groups to see each other's interests as something more than strategic talking points.

Kaplan explained, "You had farmers asking why they were being promised economic development on the backs of these kids from the Bronx. You had a Walton resident talking about the 'prison industrial complex.' You had people from upstate asking how alternative-to-incarceration programs work. We were in there as a team."



Sound like a lot?

Assemblyman Roger Green (D-Brooklyn) attended an April 1 public forum in Bainbridge to lend his support to their efforts. As chair of the Assembly's committee on children and families, which has oversight over the state Office of Children and Family Services, Green's interest in the campaign made a decisive impact. His speech connecting the issues of upstate and downstate development was covered widely in the local press and buoyed the spirits of the Bainbridge activists.

"It was good to have the support of people downstate, because we're really isolated," said O'Hara. "Having Roger Green here really helped."

On May 15, Albany announced that the youth prison had been cut from the budget.

"We were preparing for a long-term battle," Kaplan explained. "We thought the prison would just go through the budget and that we'd have to make it an issue in the gubernatorial race. Apparently we had already applied enough pressure that the Senate basically said, forget it."

O'Hara is adamant that the victory was a limited one. "It's only out of the budget for this year. We're getting petitions signed to keep it out next year too, but we've got to get at the root issue. Really that should be our representatives' job. What are they doing?"

FIRST PERSON

Justice (at last) for Judi Bari

BY KAREN PICKETT

Karen Pickett is a long-time forest activist and Earth First! organizer who worked with Judi Bari and Darryl Cherney organizing for Redwood Summer at the time of Bari's car bombing in 1990. She continued to work with Judi until her 1997 death and was a close friend and comrade.

An Oakland jury awarded \$4.4 million this June to Bari's estate and to Cherney. Bari and Cherney filed the civil suit in 1991 against four FBI agents and three Oakland police officers.

The suit, which went to trial in April 2002, charged the government with false arrest, illegal search and seizure, violation of freedom of speech by publicly misrepresenting the activists as bomb-carrying terrorists (thereby discrediting the non-violent Redwood Summer anti-logging campaign) and a conspiracy between the FBI and the Oakland Police Department to violate their constitutional rights.

Thursday, May 24, 1990 is still fresh in my memory. Shortly after noon, a pipe bomb exploded in Earth First! (EF!) activist Judi Bari's car as she drove through Oakland, California with Darryl Cherney. They were organizing for Redwood Summer, a season-long campaign modeled after the 1960s civil rights campaign Mississippi Freedom Summer, hoping to build resistance to stand up to both the corporate timber beast and rising animosity toward forest activists.

Everything changed the moment the bomb went off. The explosion nearly killed Judi, leaving her disabled for the rest of her life. Within minutes of the explosion, the FBI and Oakland police were on the scene, branding Judi and Darryl as terrorists and Earth First! as a terrorist organization. Within hours and defying all evidence, they arrested Judi and Darryl, claiming they knowingly transported the bomb.

The bombing followed months of COINTELPRO-style disruption of EF! organizing efforts: phony press releases calling for violence; fake terrorism manuals; false media stories; continuous death threats, harassment and surveillance. Even if the FBI had nothing to do with promulgating the threats, slander and violence, they treated what should have been seen as solid leads in the bombing with cavalier indifference if not a hostile cover-up.

INSIDE THE COURTROOM

As the trial opened, the defendants were literally lined up against the far wall of the courtroom — that image was worth a lot in itself.

"You probably noticed a difference between the two tables in the courtroom," said the plaintiffs' attorney Tony Serra to the jury. "You may have noticed that the plaintiffs' table fairly seethes with enthusiasm...." Indeed. The plaintiffs' table also exuded the smell of roses and other spring flowers into the stuffy federal courtroom, quite a contrast to the pork-bellied, fat-necked government attorneys at the defense table.

The people at this aromatic table, from Judi's daughter Lisa to plaintiff Darryl Cherney to Bill Simpich, the attorney who first filed the lawsuit in 1991, were happy and proud to finally be in court. The scowls at the defense table reflected the failure of their numerous challenges, motions and appeals to try to vaporize this case. The fact that the case survived for 11 years speaks volumes to its strength.

THE BIG LIES

The crux of our case was showing that police agencies conspired and collaborated to violate civil rights. We exposed the three big lies they put forth to support search and arrest warrants against all evidence and logic.

Lie # 1: "The bomb was in the back seat in plain view." It was hidden under the driver's seat, proven by the police's own crime scene photos.

Lie # 2: "The nails matched." The nails in the bomb were finishing nails — long, with no heads. The nails found in Judi's car were roofing nails — short, with large heads — and sinkers — thick with heads — both used in her work as a carpenter.

Lie # 3: "These people are terrorists known for violence." Earth First!'s record of nonviolence speaks for itself.

TESTA-LYING: FAUX FACTS, LIES AND VIDEOTAPE

The defense strategy was carried out with reckless disregard for the truth, maintaining that the defendants, as law enforcement, are beyond reproach. Several defendants were very combative on the stand, challenging even the court's right to hold them accountable. I expected them to blurt out, "You can't question us — we're the FBI!"



JUDI BARI HOSTS her *Punch & Judi Show* for the last time on Mendocino County public radio.

Innuendo, rumors and a sprinkling of bald-faced lies was admissible into the trial regarding Earth First!'s reputation. But we were not allowed to mention COINTELPRO or the FBI's bad reputation ... unless the other side broached the topic. Reprimanded by the judge several times, stalwart lead attorney Dennis Cunningham persisted nonetheless, since COINTELPRO-type operations were at the heart of this case.

DUELING BOMB EXPERTS

Police Department defendants testified that Special Agent Doyle, one of the first to arrive at the bomb scene, falsely stated the bomb was in plain view on the back seat floorboard when he arrived.

Agent David Williams, a forensic bomb specialist from the FBI Crime Lab in Washington, D.C., testified that the bomb's placement indicated it was well-hidden: the obliterated underside of the driver's seat, the undamaged back of the seat, the blast pattern damage to the floor, the end cap impact points and the bomb's booby-trap motion device.

When the jury went to see Judi's bombed Subaru, it was clear where the hole created by the explosion was. The hole is huge and ragged, and the roof bows up to the sky above it. It was chilling to see it up close. Lamely, Doyle pointed to a discoloration in the foam, as if it could support his contention at the scene that the bomb was in the back seat.

DUELING DOCTORS

Dr. Peter Slaubaugh, who saw Judi directly after the bombing, gave an excruciatingly detailed account of Judi's injuries, describing a pelvis broken so severely that some bones were broken "into hundreds of pieces — too many to count," sup-

ported by X-rays displayed on a screen for the jury. Though Slaubaugh treated Judi, he was never consulted by the FBI's "medical expert" who offered his opinion about the location of the bomb after looking at only some of the X-rays.

In a surprise that chilled the audience, attorney Bob Bloom displayed the shredded blue jeans Judi was wearing during the bombing, while the doctor on the stand blithely opined that the bomb had been in the back seat.

WITNESSES ON THE STAND

Judi's daughter, Lisa, who was nine years old in 1990, took the stand to relate how her family was affected. Though she was shielded from much of the agony, she said she was "harassed about it all the time" at school. This bright and wry 21-year-old is a strong reflection of her mother.

Folksinger and political commentator Utah Phillips brought much-needed humor to the courtroom, even evoking a qualification to an FBI objection. The FBI attorney spouted "Objection — witness is narrating ... not that we don't enjoy it."

When Darryl took the stand during the trial's fifth week, he had a lot to answer for, including his song, "Spike a Tree for Jesus" which he sang under oath. Most jurors looked perplexed; two let small smiles escape.

Maria Bee, Oakland's sharp African-American attorney, then threw Darryl a zinger. She pointed to the modeling of Redwood Summer after Mississippi Summer and the civil rights movement, challenging, "You're not equating the destruction of the trees to the injustices done to black people in the South, are you?" As the several people of color on the jury listened intently, Darryl explained that we sought to honor the civil rights struggle by striving to use similar tactics, ending with a biocentric spin about equal rights for all species.

JUDI'S TESTIMONY

The emotional highlight of the trial was Judi's testimony, videotaped five weeks before she died of breast cancer in 1997. Judi came to realize she would not be around in the flesh for the case she had spent the last seven years of her life working on, so she ensured her voice would be in court. An hour and a half of testimony was played for the jurors.

Judi's testimony was extremely poignant. Even on tape, hers was the most compelling argument the court heard about the damage done by the FBI. She offered as her first memory upon groggily waking — after hours of surgery on her shattered pelvis — that of two uniformed police at her bedside informing her she was under arrest for transport of explosives. That followed her description of the horror of the explosion itself and the pain so severe, she invited death.

There were not many dry eyes in the courtroom as she told of being terrified of another attack as she lay immobilized by traction devices, and the additional terror she felt at the prospect of being framed for this violent crime, fearing "spending my children's childhood in prison and not being able to raise them."

Many of the threats made against Judy were shown to the jury, including the "Welcome Mississippi Summer" flyer with a drawing of a noose; a flyer reading "If you want to be a martyr, we will be happy to oblige"; the rifle cross-hairs superimposed on Judi's face flyer; and the homophobic letter from the "Committee for the Death of Earth First!"

Even the deliberation process was dramatic. The jury's first request was for the text of the First and Fourth amendments of the Constitution, to which the government objected. The text of the amendments was read to the jury. The FBI then filed a motion to dismiss the whole case.

The motion was not dismissed, but neither was the case. Serra's words — "Pray for the jury ... so they can come to an objective decision" — rang in the ears of those assembled on the courthouse plaza.

Fortunately, they did.

EL INDEPENDIENTE

IMAGENES PERDEDORAS

Sobre La Crisis Del Fotoperiodismo

POR PEPE BAEZA, DIRECTOR DE FOTOGRAFIA, LA VANGUARDIA

Lo que ocurre en las imágenes de la prensa es un síntoma fiable de lo que ocurre en la prensa y lo que ocurre en ésta es uno de los síntomas más claros de cómo se configura la acumulación y el ejercicio del poder en el mundo contemporáneo.

La imagen documental y, más específicamente, la imagen testimonial están en crisis en la prensa. Esta crisis es expresión de la crisis general del Periodismo. Hay una falta de credibilidad, que en parte es consecuencia de las renuncias sucesivas que los profesionales han ido admitiendo frente a unos poderes mediáticos cada vez más concentrados y cada vez más instrumentalizados por los intereses de los grandes grupos financieros.

La prensa se convierte poco a poco en un producto más y por tanto sus contenidos en mercancías; pone en entredicho su dimensión fundamental como expresión de crítica y control sobre el poder a través de la información libre y significativa para el interés colectivo.

El periodismo investiga y denuncia la décima parte de lo que sería necesario. Proliferan en cambio los contenidos de distracción, la dimensión espectacular, la modelización de los lectores en favor del consumo. Los modelos dominantes son así —en revistas y dominicales— el “People” (retratos y comentarios que enaltecen la apariencia física y opiniones dispersas de personajes del espectáculo, de la moda y del deporte) y el llamado Periodismo de Servicios en todos sus ámbitos (viajes, moda, belleza, decoración, consejos de autoayuda psicológica, etc.) En el primer caso se modeliza estableciendo patrones de imitación con los que es posible construir una identidad cada vez más sometida a estándares. En los “servicios” se concentra tal exceso de incitación al individualismo y al consumo, que la dimensión colectiva, política, de nuestra realización como seres sociales queda suprimida.

¿Qué papel juega la imagen periodística en todo este panorama? Necesariamente el de comparsa. La publicidad es el tipo de imagen realmente importante para las empresas periodísticas, porque es su soporte económico fundamental.

La imagen de realidad es molesta, so pena de perder su razón de ser y usada en todo su potencial estorbaría en demasiadas ocasiones a la eficacia de los mensajes publicitarios.

Si quieres colaborar en EL INDEPENDIENTE (escribir artículos, corregir pruebas, traducir, etc.), envía un email a: imc-nyc-espanol@lists.indymedia.org o asiste a una de nuestras reuniones en IMC (34 E 29th St, piso 2) los martes a las 7.

El documentalismo es denostado además desde sectores del pensamiento estético postmoderno que lo consideran obsoleto y más subjetivamente aún, “aburrido”. Esta auténtica “pinza” es la causa de la asfixia del fotoperiodismo.

Toda esta situación requiere que el colectivo más numeroso y con mayor poder en la prensa, el de la escritura periodística, comience a considerar que el desprecio que se está haciendo de la imagen está dejando de ser una insuficiencia profesional para convertirse en una grave irresponsabilidad.

El resultado es que la pérdida de cultura visual profesional crítica hace que en el terreno de la imagen los diarios sean muy iguales unos a otros, y que estén estancados en unos parámetros muy

de creadores provenientes de diversidad de campos, empezando —como fue habitual en los años 20 y 30— por los artistas. Es necesario que el debate sobre las imágenes de la prensa se desplace también y de una vez por todas al interior de las redacciones. Los medios son la posibilidad de que se realice el potencial transformador de la fotografía. Fuera de los medios, en el arte, la fotografía sigue siendo una valiosa referencia de cómo construir el sentido de las cosas, pero no una opción real de intervenir sobre las mismas. Hay que propiciar un debate profesional, inaplazable, que tiene dos preguntas principales: “¿Por qué la prensa está haciendo lo que hace con la imagen?” y “¿Qué pueden hacer los profesionales por la pervivencia y el desarrollo comprometido y creativo de la imagen de realidad?”

Los precios, y por tanto el prestigio, son, insisto, las formas que el sistema de mercado brutal y sin controles tiene para acabar con lo que le perjudica. Y la imagen democrática —la que nos habla de las condiciones de organización de los ciudadanos, de la humanidad enteramente un enorme potencial de movilización que no interesa promover, sino mantener en esa miseria, en ese estrangulamiento que es el propio reflejo de lo que pasa en los medios y que el pensamiento estético anti-documental ignora, o cree consecuencia “lógica” del tipo de imagen que considera perdedora en el devenir de la historia. Como ya señaló Benjamin es la historia general la que nos da las claves para interpretar la historia de la fotografía. Y la historia contemporánea está viendo el triunfo absoluto del gran capital monopolista y de la rapiña globalizadora.

¿A quién sirven las imágenes que vemos? Esa es la única pregunta que necesita siempre una respuesta. La sociedad necesita imágenes que informen, analicen y transformen. Las necesita mucho.



DIARIOS: Más de lo mismo.

bajos de riqueza visual.

Predominan la imagen de acontecimiento local o suministrada por los monopolios informativos de AP, Reuters o AFP. Imágenes iguales para todos que reducen la realidad del mundo a estereotipos que anulan la diversidad de los fenómenos a los que se refieren y que sin embargo ocultan, en su profusión de escenarios, lo más obvio: a quién aprovecha la injusticia y la violencia.

No existe una imagen equivalente al periodismo de investigación, porque prácticamente no existe periodismo de investigación. Lo que existe en los diarios es una imagen al servicio del texto, comodín de encuadre de las piezas de la página; imágenes-parche, imágenes-floresco... Hay demasiadas imágenes en la prensa y las intrascendentes anulan el valor de las necesarias.

Paradójicamente hacer una prensa con menos imágenes sería más difícil y más caro.

Las imágenes ilustrativas —las nuevas imágenes de la prensa— están pasando además a sustituir a las imágenes de realidad en los territorios propios del periodismo clásico. Gran parte de las revistas de información general que evocan la concepción más arraigada de lo que siempre hemos entendido como periodismo han cambiado la imagen fotoperiodística por la fotoilustración: *Time*, *Newsweek*, *US News*, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, *Le Point*, *The Economist*, *Der Spiegel*, *Stern*, y muchas otras ofrecen cada semana en sus portadas imágenes que no testimonian nada; solamente evocan y simbolizan, con formas de reclamo más propias de la publicidad que del periodismo y que en general ocultan más que muestran.

No se trata de despreciar ningún tipo de imagen. Todas deben tener cabida en la prensa. De hecho la prensa deberá su riqueza visual, si llega a recuperarla, a su apertura a las influencias y a las colaboraciones directas

Paraguay

Viene de la pág. 20

Uno de los elementos por los cuales la campaña a favor de las privatizaciones tuvo un tropiezo importante en Paraguay es la absoluta falta de claridad y la corrupción con que se la manejó por parte de funcionarios del gobierno. La Secretaría de la Reforma está intervenida por la Contraloría General de la República a raíz de hechos ilícitos comprobados.

La profundización del deterioro económico a un nivel nunca visto —el desempleo y el subempleo llegan al 34 por ciento, el 25 por ciento de la población campesina está en la pobreza extrema—, la presión de Estados Unidos y el FMI para la aplicación de los planes de ajustes y privatizaciones, la absoluta incapacidad e inmoralidad del gobierno de González Macchi y las consecuencias de la crisis argentina hacían prever un estallido en Paraguay.

Varias organizaciones de la izquierda paraguaya sostienen que la crisis actual forma parte de las dificultades de los sectores dominantes por encontrar caminos de gobernabilidad después del estallido social de marzo de 1999, cuando se produjo el asesinato del vicepresidente Luis María Argaña, que desarmó a la cúpula dirigente del país y llevó al gobierno al actual presidente. La movilización en curso logró la unidad del movimiento popular y de la izquierda, desbordando al gobierno y las fuerzas represivas.

EL INDEPENDIENTE



REBELIÓN EN PARAGUAY

TOMADO DE WWW.REBELION.ORG

La mayor movilización social desde el levantamiento de marzo de 1999, que se produjo durante tres semanas contra el plan de privatizaciones del gobierno paraguayo, se saldó con una contundente victoria.

Después de tres semanas de movilizaciones en contra de la política neoliberal del desgastado gobierno de Luis González Macchi se consiguió el aplazamiento por tiempo indefinido de la venta de la empresa telefónica estatal Copaco. El anuncio fue realizado el 11 de junio por la noche en cadena de televisión, cuando el presidente paraguayo aseguró que no se procederá a la apertura de sobres con las ofertas de la licitación pública internacional.

La dramática decisión de González Macchi se produjo en medio de una fuerte oleada de movilizaciones populares, sobre todo campesinas, que mantienen bloqueos de rutas en todo el país. Simultáneamente, miles de campesinos arribaron a la capital para aguardar la decisión de la Cámara de Senadores sobre la anulación de la ley 1.615 de privatizaciones, que ya contaba con media sanción de la cámara baja.

Durante diez días hubo bloqueos de las principales rutas del país que culminaron con un acuerdo parcial con el gobierno sobre cinco de los seis puntos levantados por

el Congreso Democrático del Pueblo (CDP), pero seguía pendiente la derogación de la ley de privatizaciones, así como la libertad de un centenar de manifestantes que fueron detenidos en San Patricio, departamento de Misiones, a 230 quilómetros de la capital.

Ésta es la mayor movilización de protesta del movimiento popular en lo que va del período de transición iniciado en 1989. La profunda crisis económica y política que vive el país junto al descrédito del gobierno por su corrupción y su incapacidad rompieron los diques de contención de la protesta popular, encabezada por el movimiento campesino organizado.

La explosión social se vio agudizada por la aguda crisis en que entró el Estado por la falta de recursos para solventar sus gastos, y las graves consecuencias de la crisis argentina que redujo en un 80 por ciento el intercambio comercial mientras las exportaciones paraguayas en general bajaron en un 50 por ciento. Además se siente el

fuerte impacto que está teniendo en la economía local el aumento de la cotización del dólar y la suba en los precios de los combustibles.

El CDP, convocante de las movilizaciones, está compuesto por los dos más importantes bloques de organizaciones populares surgidas después de la crisis y casi desaparición de las centrales sindicales destrozadas por

la corrupción y el burocratismo: la Plenaria Popular articulada tras el secuestro por grupos parapoliciales de los activistas del Movimiento Patria Libre (MPL) Juan Arrom y Anuncio Martí, y el Frente contra la Enajenación de los Bienes Públicos, que comenzó su lucha contra la reforma de la banca pública. Estas dos organizaciones cuentan en sus filas a las dos principales organizaciones campesinas del país, la Mesa Coordinadora Nacional de Organizaciones Campesinas (MCNOC) y la Federación Nacional Campesina (FNC).

Este conjunto de organizaciones levantó la bandera del rechazo a la ley antiterrorista, al proyecto de reforma de la banca pública, a la privatización de las rutas, a la aplicación del IVA agropecuario, la derogación de la ley de privatizaciones y la lucha en contra de la corrupción y la impunidad. Los representantes del gobierno en la mesa de negociaciones aceptaron todos los puntos, menos el referido a las privatizaciones. El 14 de junio debía realizarse la apertura de ofertas para la venta de Copaco, tras lo cual está prevista la privatización de la empresa de servicios sanitarios Essap.

UN NUEVO BOTÍN

En los últimos años fueron privatizadas la empresa aérea Lapsa, la siderúrgica Acepar, la empresa de alcohol Apal, la flota mercante del Estado, Flomerpasa y, siguiendo el ejemplo argentino, después de la venta de la empresa telefónica se encará la del servicio sanitario y el agua potable, la electricidad, el seguro social, el correo y la aduana, además de las rutas nacionales. Es la forma de satisfacer las exigencias del capital trasnacional, el FMI y sus operadores locales a los que se denuncia como probadamente corruptos.

CONTINÚA EN LA PÁG. 19



LOS CAMPESINOS SE OPOEN A LAS PRIVATIZACIONES.

ARGENTINA EN EL BRONX

POR ANA BASUÑO Y SILVIA ARANA

Nieves Ayress y Víctor Toro son dos activistas chilenos que han dedicado su vida a la defensa de los derechos humanos. Durante los setenta, estuvieron presos en las cárceles de Pinochet. Luego, fueron obligados a dejar su país. Estuvieron por varios países antes de venir a Estados Unidos y establecerse en el Bronx. Al ver cuanta falta hacía un espacio para actividades culturales, sociales y políticas de las comunidades del área fundaron Vamos a la peña del Bronx en 1987. "Vamos a la peña" proviene de un poema de la gran folklorista y poeta chilena Violeta Parra. La peña era una colina a donde se reunían indígenas rebeldes chilenos para organizar el movimiento de resistencia contra los colonizadores españoles. Desde 1987, La peña (versión abreviada del nombre original) ha brindado un espacio a las diversas comunidades del Bronx — afroamericanos, puertorriqueños e inmigrantes de diferentes orígenes. Ofrece clases de idioma, talleres de arte, seminarios sobre salud, sobre inmigración y otros temas de interés.

Siguiendo con esta tradición de ofrecer un espacio de expresión cultural, social y política, el pasado 9 de junio, La peña mostró la exposición "Argentina ahora".

"Argentina ahora" es un conjunto de fotografías

acompañadas de textos informativos, videos, graffiti y arte popular de Argentina. Varios de los artistas participantes pertenecen al colectivo "Argentina arde". Este grupo se formó en diciembre de 2001 para reportar la verdadera historia de las protestas populares que conmovieron a ese país. Este colectivo de prensa publica un semanario, produce videos, hace exhibiciones itinerantes de fotografía y mantiene un sitio web a través de Indymedia Argentina. Otros artistas participantes son de Estados Unidos, como el fotógrafo documental Andrew Stern que estuvo en Argentina recientemente formando parte de la caravana de IMC y el colectivo de cine Big Noise Film.

Uno de los elementos visuales más significativos de



ARGENTINOS EN LA CALLE.

la muestra es un collage hecho con volantes de diferentes grupos políticos, donde se mezclan invitaciones a asambleas barriales con propaganda de grupos nacionalistas de derecha. Entre las pintadas, o graffitis, abundan las protestas contra los bancos que congelaron los ahorros de cientos de miles de argentinos.

Las fotografías reflejan la decisión de los argentinos que tomaron las calles y llegaron hasta la Casa Rosada a exigir el fin del modelo neoliberal que causó estragos en el país.

En los videos resuenan las cacerolas de un millón de personas que el 20 de diciembre dijeron "Que se vayan todos".

Las imágenes más fuertes de la exposición muestran las asambleas barriales, los piquetes y los obreros que se hicieron cargo de las fábricas en quiebra. Argentina ahora muestra un pueblo que dijo basta y está empeñando a reconstruirse como nación. ¿Y qué mejor lugar para presentarla que en La peña?